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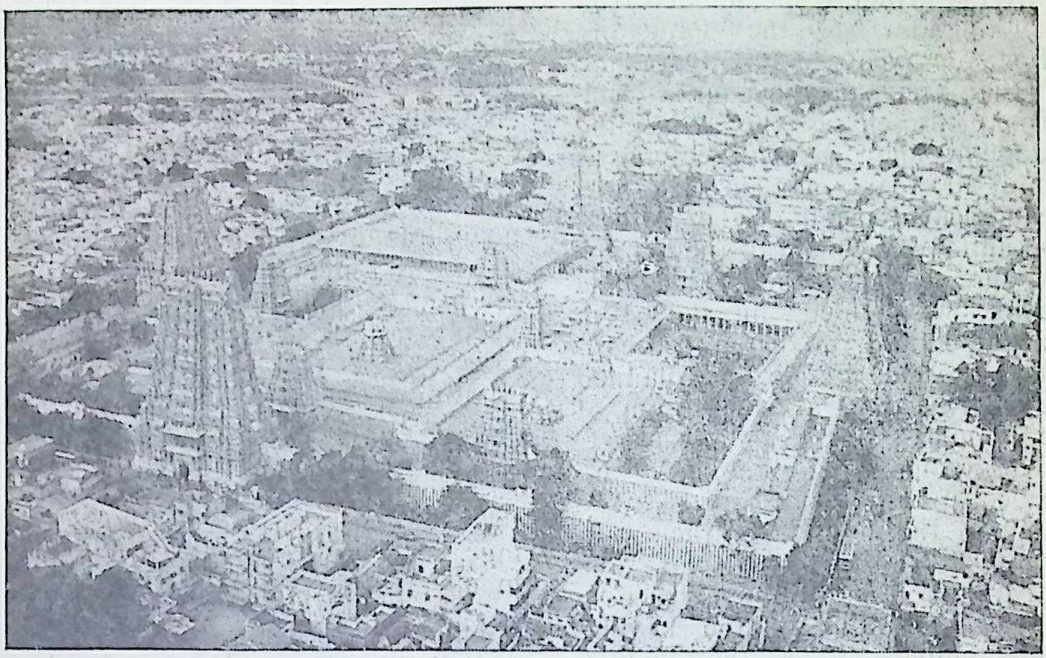
BHARAT DARSHAN

Minakshi Temple-Madurai

By Dr. R. Vajreswari



An aerial view of the famous Minakshi Temple
Photo : D. Christopher, Madurai

FROM Kanchi, the city of temples, we are going to Madurai, another temple city. It is a historic, ancient city that has been well planned. It has grown and flourished around the temple complex.

Madurai has been the capital of the Pandyan Kingdom, one of the three Tamil kingdoms of the South. Both in the Ramayana and Mahabharata, there are references to Madurai. Megasthenes, the Greek Ambassador in the court of Chandra gupta Maurya, mentions about the Princess ruling Madurai. The great Sangam (Academy) of Madurai, attracted poets, scholars and patrons of learning. Tamil literature became rich with the contributions of the members of this Sangam.

The Pandyan dynasty ruled over Madurai for about 1500 years. Of course there were many gaps when their fortunes declined. Malik Kafur, the General of King Alauddin, invaded Madurai and destroyed

parts of the temple. The people of the city suffered very much under the Muslim rule. The ruler of the Vijayanagar Empire, came to the rescue of the people. He came with a big army and drove away the invaders and handed over the kingdom to the Pandyans. After some years, a mighty general of the Vijayanagar Empire established himself as the King and founded the Nayak dynasty. About 200 years of their rule was a significant period in the restoration and development of the temple. The greatest of them, Thirumala Nayak, who ruled in the 17th century carried out extensive renovations to the temple and planned the festivals and administration of the temple.

The temple and the city are steeped in myths and legends. The origin of the city, the miracle performed by Lord Sundareswara, the festivals of the temple—all these unravel the glory of the Divine. The temple is a twin-temple, dedicated to Lord Sundareswara and His consort Minakshi.

The story of the origin of the temple is very interesting. Once, a merchant named Dhananjaya, was returning from his travels. As it suddenly became dark, he decided to take shelter in a mandapam he saw in the midst of the Kadamba forest. (Kadamba is a kind of tree). When he got up the next morning, he saw a Siva Linga to which worship had been offered. He was sure that Devas had offered worship in the night.

He rushed to King Kulasekara and informed him about the temple in the midst of the forest. The king was overjoyed to learn of the temple and planned to visit it. That night Siva appeared to him in a dream and told him that 'Indra' had been worshipping him in the Kadambavana and he should build a suitable temple around that sacred Linga and plan a city around the temple. Kulasekara saw drops of nectar falling from Siva's matted hair and decided to name the city Mathurai (Mathu-nectar). Further guidance was given to the king when he launched on planning the city. A serpent appeared and indicated the boundaries of the city by twisting itself into a circle with its tail in its mouth.

Kulasekara was succeeded by Malayathuvasan. He and his Queen Kanchanamala were great devotees of Siva. They were not blessed with a child. As directed by the Divine, they performed a Yaga (sacrifice). Out of the holy-fire emerged a three year old girl shining in all glory. The king and queen were very happy to accept the girl but they were a little disappointed because it was not a boy, and the girl had three breasts.

Money can buy weapons but not bravery.

Jay Cafe,

J. P. Nagar, Goregaon (East), Bombay - 400 063.

The voice of God declared "Name the child 'Thadathagai' and bring her up as a Prince. When she meets her life-companion, the third breast will disappear".

The young princess was trained in the arts of war. She was crowned queen of the kingdom. Soon after, she launched on a Dig-vijaya (conquest in all directions). The victorious princess marched on Mt. Kailas, the abode of Siva and defeated the Boothaganas, the army of Siva. Hearing of this defeat, Lord Siva appeared before Thadathagai. The victorious queen beheld the Lord and she became shy and coy. She had met her Lord and her third breast disappeared. "Devi, return to Madurai. I will come and marry you next week", declared Siva.

With great pomp and glory, the wedding of Lord Sundareswara and Meenakshi was celebrated. Devas, sages and devotees flocked to behold the Divine wedding. On that occasion, many miracles were performed by the Lord. There is a marvellous sculpture depiciting the wedding scene. The Divine couple ruled the city, conferring all blessings on the devotees.

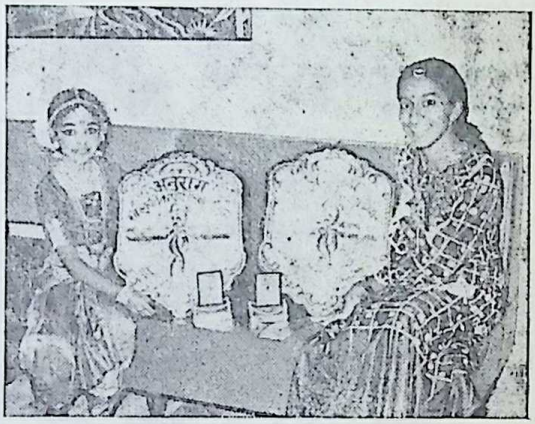
It is interesting to note the significance of the meaning of "Meenakshi', Meen—Fish; Akshi—Eyes; the 'Fish-eyed one'. It is believed that the mother fish protects its young ones by its gaze. The Divine Mother protects devotees by Her very sight.

You can imagine the size of the temple when I give you its dimensions. It is located in a rectangle 850 feet long and 800 feet broad. High walls protect the temple. There are 12 gopurams (entrance towers) and four of them in the four directions are the main ones. The Southern tower is the tallest and measures 160 feet. There are two Vimanas; these are over the inner shrines of Sundareswara and Minakshi and they are gold-plated.

There is a 1000 pillared hall, many mandapas, many shrines and a tank. There are magnificent sculptures. We will spend a little more time looking at the Gopurams and sculptures.

To be continued.

TWO 'FIRSTS' FOR UTTAM BALA VIHAR

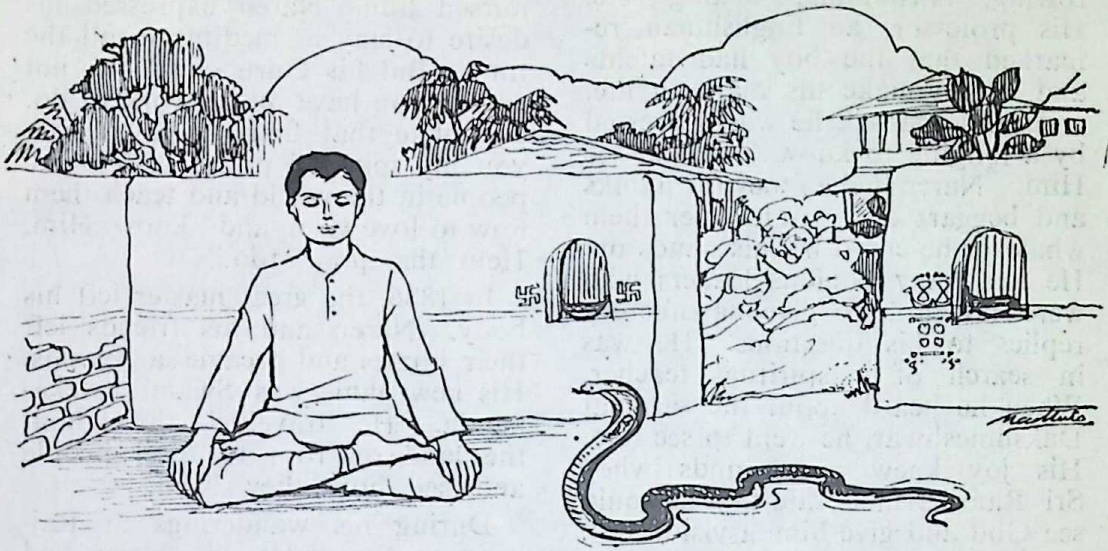


It was a feather in the cap of Uttam Bala Vihar when Rajani Viswamurthy and Jayashree Subramanyam bagged the first prizes in the Anurag Dance, and Singing Competition held at Birla Krida Kendra on September 24th, 1979. Both are members of Uttam Bala Vihar and also students of St. Anthony's Girls High School at Chembur.

Swami Vivekananda

THE STORY OF HIS LIFE

By Renuka Neogi



EVERY Indian has heard of Swami Vivekananda. He was born as Narendra Nath in the renowned Datta family of Calcutta on 12th January 1863. His father was a rich and successful lawyer and his mother a devout and enlightened lady. They had a great influence on his mind and character.

As a child, Naren was very naughty. His mother used to say, "I prayed to Shiva for a son and he has sent me one of his demons." To bring him under control, she would pour pots of cold water on his head and repeat "Shiva, Shiva, Shiva". This would calm him down.

His favourite game was playing at meditation. He would sit cross-legged on the floor, shut his eyes and think of God, forgetting the outer world. On one occasion, a deadly cobra came crawling on the floor. His friends shouted and ran away but he sat on without knowing what was happening. Luckily, the snake quietly slid away without doing any harm.

Naren enjoyed playing in a neighbour's garden with his friends. They would climb a big banyan tree and swing from the branches, making much noise. The old grandfather of the house was annoyed and to stop their antics told them that an evil spirit lived in the tree and it would kill them. Not heeding this, Naren climbed up again and said, "If that were true, I would have been caught long ago and killed." He bid his friends

not to blindly believe in what people said.

Naren was a brilliant student with a creative mind. He was also a good athlete. He learnt riding, rowing, swimming, boxing etc. His professor, an Englishman, remarked that the boy had talents and would make his mark in life.

As time passed, he was possessed by a longing to know God and see Him. Naren had a fancy for monks and beggars and would offer them whatever he could lay his hands on. He met many religious leaders who were not able to give satisfactory replies to his questions. He was in search of a spiritual teacher. When he heard about the saint at Dakshineshwar, he went to see him. His joy knew no bounds when Sri Ramakrishna said that he could see God and give him a vision too. He had at last come to a true God man, who always lived in ecstasy.

Sri Ramakrishna was all praise for Naren who was so pure. He showered all his love and affection on him, and trained him up to be his chief disciple as he possessed the qualities of a born leader.

When Naren's father died, his family faced dire poverty. As the eldest son, he had to support his mother, sisters and brothers. He had his B.A. degree but could not get suitable work. He came to his Guru and related his sad story. Sri Ramakrishna sent him to the Kali temple saying that the Mother would give him what he wanted. Thrice he was sent in and when Sri Ramakrishna asked "What did Mother say?", he replied, "I could not ask her for money. I prayed for devotion, selfless love and for the power to understand her". Pleased by this, his Guru blessed him so that his family would no more suffer from want.

When Sri Ramakrishna was very ill, Naren and a group of his friends nursed him. Naren expressed his desire to stay in meditation all the time. But his Guru said "No, not now. You have much work to do. Complete that first. I have given you my spiritual power. Help the people in the world and teach them how to love God and know Him. Help the poor too."

In 1886, the great master left his body. Naren and his friends left their homes and became sannyasins. His new name was Swami Vivekananda. He travelled throughout the land on foot to meet people and see how they lived.

During his wanderings in Rajputana, the ruler of Alwar had discussions with him. He said that he could not worship a piece of stone or wood or metal like others did. Swamiji asked the Dewan to bring down the Maharajah's photograph from the wall and to spit on it. All the courtiers looked at each other with fear in their eyes. The Dewan said "This is the likeness of our Maharajah. How can I do such a thing?" Turning to the Maharajah, Swamiji explained, "See, even though this is a bit of paper, your loyal servants see you in it and look upon it with respect. It is the same with the devotees who worship images of Gods and Goddesses. They are reminded of their Ishta (chosen deity) and are able to fix their minds on God." The Maharajah bowed down and said, "You have opened my eyes."

To be Continued.

Princess Khairi—The Tame Tigress

By Br. Apta Chaitanya

Let me introduce you to Khairi, the Princess. She is a four and a half year-old tigress. She is 9 1/2 feet long from head to tail and about a metre high. She is called Khairi because she was found near the small mountain river Khairi in Simulipal in the State of Orissa. When she was hardly two months old, she was brought to Mr. Saroj Raj Chaudhuri, I. F. S., Director, Project Tiger, Simulipal. Mr. Chaudhuri is a great lover of animals and also knows a lot about them. He was very happy to foster Khairi. He is her foster father. Niharabala, who also belongs to the Project Tiger, became her foster mother.

Now Khairi lives in the residence of Mr. Chaudhuri at the forest guest house in Jashipur on the outskirts of Simulipal. Do not think that Khairi is bound. She is a free animal. She lives in perfect friendship with animals of various species like a hyena, bear, dogs, civets and human beings. It is a grand educational institution where nothing is taught but many things are learnt.

Our Khairi is an international figure . She is known widely to the tiger lovers all over the world. People from various parts of the world send her money and presents. Children write letters to her. She is loved by the children who have seen, touched and played with her. She is a great attraction to all. I know her personally. For two days I was her guest. She is very kind, friendly and large-hearted. She loves all those who are not afraid of her.

She will greet you with a broad smile. She will then rub herself against you and demand a petting and remember, if you do not oblige, she will be cross with you. If you are most friendly with her, she may even hug you but you may not be able to bear her great weight. You will be surprised to know that ever since she was a baby, she used to sleep with her foster mother and father on their beds. I am sure you will love to know that she has never soiled the bed on which she sleeps. On the contrary, she uses the bathroom. She has a bath tub specially built for her. She is very healthy unlike the tigers you see in the circus, underfed and lean. She has only two meals a day and comes to ask for them fondly. She is fed with great love and care. She is fond of Amul sprinkled on her meat. She gets so much love, care and attention from her foster parents that any

Money can get plenty of friends but not a true friend.

Vijay Corporation

65 Ideal Ind. Estate Mathuradas Mills Compound, Lower Parel Bombay-400 013.

child would envy her.

Once she was left in the forest when she was two and a half years old. She did not run away. After four days, she came back to her foster parents and was delighted to be received by them. There is a documentay film on Khairi and it is a great attraction for both children and elderly people.

She is a research subject. A lot of unknown facts about tiger behaviour in different living conditions are coming to light. Sarojji studies her like he would study a book. Khairi loves to greet and welcome people who come to meet her. I am sure all of you children will also love to meet and play with her.

RIDDLES

1. What sticks in one place yet goes round the world?
2. What is impossible to hold for very long?
3. What has no wings but can fly?
4. What goes up when the rain comes down?

Answers on page no. 20

PUZZLES

1. Insert the missing letter
   A I E U ?
2. Insert the missing letter
   A D G
   D I N
   I P ?
3. Insert the missing number
   6 10 18 34 ?

Answers on page no. 20

ASSAM—A SENTRY OF THE NORTH EAST FRONTIER

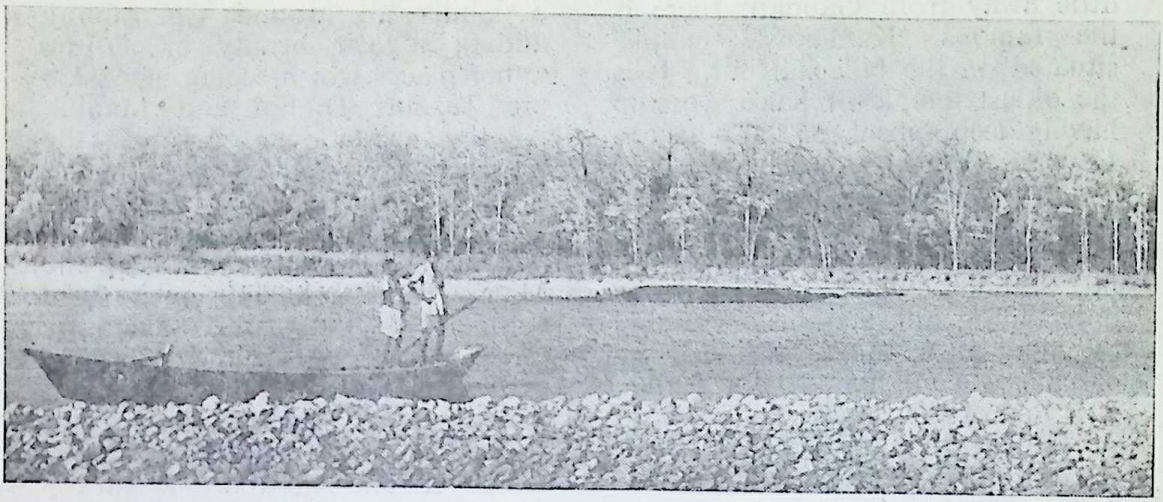
By Shamsuddin

DOTTED with hills at the foot of the Himalayas, Assam is joined to the rest of the country by a narrow strip of land winding its way between Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Nepal.

Situated at the extreme north east corner of India, Assam, in a way, guards the north east gate of the country. Nature is very generous here and the whole region is filled with beautiful fascinating scenes. The colourful tribal people inhabiting the land form another feature of attraction in the remote land of Assam.

Most of the area in Assam is covered with hills and dales. They command a beauty of their own. The sky with innumerable patterns of clouds touching the peaks now and then, provides a scene worth admiring. The natural resources are also bountiful here and the hilly areas are filled with plenty of coal, limestone and various other minerals. The plains here also contain many oil fields. The forest wealth in Assam is very plentiful.

Above all Assam is well known for its original home of tea plantations. Nearly 400,000 acres of land in Assam is under tea cultivation. The vast fields of tea stretching to the horizon, appear like a huge emerald carpet. Men and women with their colourful dress and gay faces are seen here and there pluck-



Manas Sanctuary, Assam
Photo : Shamsuddin

ing the tender flushes and collecting them in the baskets tied on their backs. The monotony of their work is broken by their occasional lively conversation mixed with heartfelt laughter ringing through the whole atmosphere.

The wind blowing in the plains is cool and strong. An occasional passer-by, tempted to hear the folk songs of the pluckers at work, has to strain his ears to catch the sound. The songs generally tell of some old legend. The people of Assam are proud of their ancient heritage unaffected by the changes of time and circumstances. They can also boast of their tea industry which is the largest in the country and which is the second biggest foreign exchange earner for India. The tea produced here is of high quality and is popular in the country as well as abroad.

The mighty river, Brahmaputra is a great centre of attraction in Assam. It is one of the biggest rivers of India. It is a great boon to the state as its irrigation gives bumper crops of jute, rice and mustard. At the same time it has another aspect too. In a fury of flood it is uncontrollable and by inundating a vast area of land causes great destruction of crops, cattle, men and property. In normal times, it is a pleasure to have a steamer trip along the river. Also the temple of Umananda situated on an island in the middle of the Brahmaputra is a place of attraction both for tourists as well as religious people.

Gauhati, known as Pragjyotishpur in ancient days, is one of the famous towns of Assam. Having all the facilities of modern life, the town has attraction for visitors. A

little away from Gauhati, there is the famous 'Kamakhya temple' situated on the Nilachal hill. It is the oldest temple of Sakti worship having deep appeal for the pilgrims. Devoted Hindus from all over the country pay a visit to this temple and offer their worship to the great deity.

South of Gauhati is the state capital, Shillong, which is one of the outstanding hill stations in India. Situated at a high altitude, its climate is cool and health giving. It is one of the famous hill stations of India providing a fine summer resort for the visitors. The forests containing beautiful pine trees as well as green grass lands present a fine scenery so soothing to the eye and pleasing to the heart. Nearly thirteen miles away from Shillong is a place known as Nong-krem, where the Khasis hold their dance festivals. The spell these beautiful dancers cast over the whole countryside lingers long in the memory of all who happen to be present on such occasions.

Standing innocuously on an open field is the underground garrison of the Ahom King, Rudra Singh. A maze of underground chambers go three storeys deep into the earth. A tunnel built as an escape route connects the garrison to the Dikhow river. Nearby is the Rang Ghar. This oval pavilion served as the royal gallery for the Ahom Kings during sporting events. About 9 km. from Sibsagar is the Kareng Ghar, an Ahom castle.

Cherrapunji is another famous place of Assam. The rainfall here is the highest-426 inches. It is the wettest place in the world. There are hills all around Cherrapunji adding to the beauty of nature. Other places worth seeing in Assam are Tezpur, Digboi and Manjul. Another attraction of Assam is the establishment of fine game sanctuaries—the most famous among which is the Kaziranga game reserve. Among the other sanctuaries are the Manas Sanctuary, 110 miles from Gauhati, the Sonai Rupa Sanctuary, 20 miles from Tezpur aerodrome and the Pabha or Millory Buffalo Sanctuary. Rare animals like rhinoceros and other animals are preserved here. There are a variety of animals, birds, reptiles and insects in Assam.

Above all, Assam is known for its charming tribal people with distinctive customs of their own. They are freedom loving people and by not abiding to the force of foreign rulers, have maintained their ancient culture and heritage even to this day. Their songs and dances are remarkable, specially the Garo Harvest dance which is most famous. These are very attractive and entertaining.

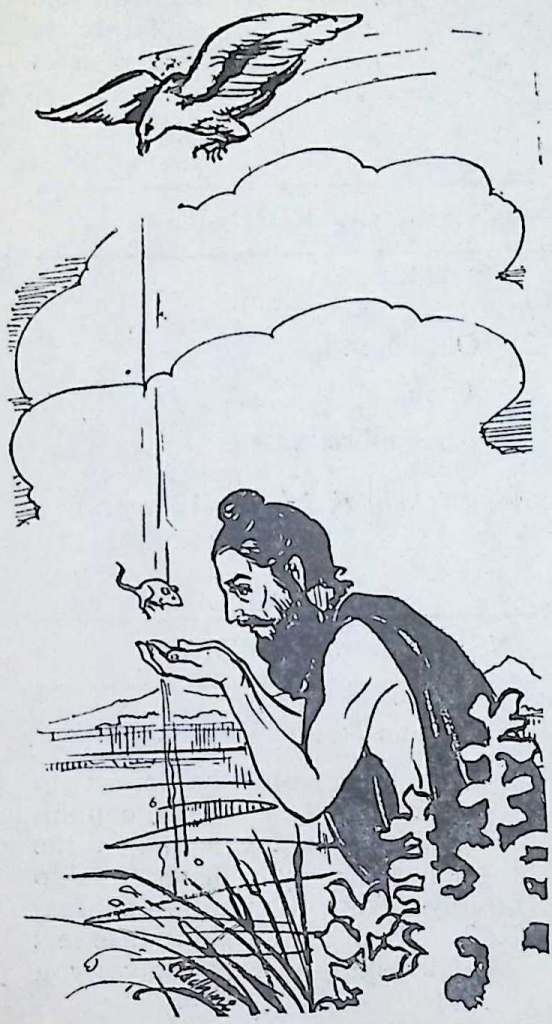
The people of Assam are well known for their deep aesthetic sense and artistic creations. They have a fine taste for colours. The Assamese fabrics with their attractive designs, fine shawls and chadars and charming bags bear testimony to this. Thus, Assam, though a small place, contains a large variety of interests and is worth visiting. It has been a place of attraction for thousands.

Next month—Look out for TREASURY OF BOOKS.

The Mouse Maid's Choice

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

Retold by Lalogue Postvala



LONG ago, a holy man lived on the bank of the Ganges. His name was Yajnavalkya. One day after he had bathed in the sacred river and had begun to rinse his mouth, a little female-mouse dropped from an eagle's beak into his hand.

When he saw what it was, he laid the dead mouse on a banyan leaf, stepped into the river, repeated his bath, and performed a ceremony of purification. Through the magic power of his holiness, he changed the dead she-mouse into a little girl.

Taking the girl by the hand, he led her to his hermitage. There he presented her to his wife. "My dear wife," he said, "We've no children. Take this girl. Rear her with tender care and love her as you would your own daughter."

The wife was very happy. She looked after the girl affectionately. Years passed. The girl grew into a beautiful maiden. When the mother realised that her little girl was of marriageable age, she went to her husband and said, "Sire, our little girl is now a woman. You must find a husband for her."

"You're right, my dear. We'll give her hand to the best suitor." Thinking a while, he said, "Who can be mightier than the Sun God? He gives us light and warmth. I'll summon the blessed Sun and offer her to him."

The holy man prayed to the Sun, who appeared immediately and asked, "Sire, what can I do for you?"

"Here is my daughter. Be kind

enough to marry her."

Then turning to the daughter, he said, "Child, do you take this celestial body for your husband?"

The girl standing near the door of her room replied, "No Father. He is burning hot. Please call someone else."

The father hearing this, asked the Sun, "Oh Divine one, is there anyone superior to you?"

"The Cloud is greater than me," said the Sun. "When he covers me, I disappear."

The holy man then called upon the Cloud and offered him his daughter. The girl however refused saying, "He's so dark and gloomy. Give me someone else."

The Cloud suggested the Wind. "He's better than me. He can blow me off."

The Wind too came. Again the girl was not pleased. "He is too restless", was her comment.

The Wind told the holy man to call the Mountain. "I can never blow him off. He is strong and stable."

When the Mountain came, the girl cried, "He's so rough."

The holy man once again asked his question, "Oh Kingly Mountain, is there anyone mightier than thou?"

"Yes, Sir, " said the Mountain. "The mice. They can riddle me with holes."

As soon as the holy man presented the King-Mouse to his daughter, she was thrilled. She joyfully said, "Dear Father, he's the man for me."

So the holy man turned the pretty maid back into a she-mouse. He blessed her marriage with the King-Mouse, thinking "Nature is hard to beat. One always seeks one's own kind."

ANSWERS to RIDDLES

1. A postage stamp
2. Our breath
3. Time
4. An umbrella

By B. Gopalakrishnan (12 years)

ANSWERS to PUZZLES

1. O (one vowel is missing).
2. W (to get from the letters in column 2 to those in column 3, skip as many letters in the alphabet as you have to skip to get from cloumn 1 to column 2. Thus I to P skips 6 letters and 6 skipped from P gives you W).
3. 66 (each number is twice the previous one, minus 2)

By Jal Engineer

Welcome Address at Yagna

The welcome address at Swami Chinmayanandaji's 300th Geeta Gnana Yagna at Chaupatty, Bombay was delivered by 10 year - old Yamini Krishnan. The speech of this gifted sixth standard student was greeted with thunderous applause. The clarity of the speech and the confidence with which it was made was also appreciated by Swamiji.

The talk is reproduced below:—

POOJYA Gurudev, Respected Uncles Rajnathji and Batraji and respected elders,

When I joined the Bala Vihar of our mission years ago as a tiny tot, I never dreamt that I would have the good fortune of being blessed by Gurudev for speaking on such a glorious occasion!

Poojya Gurudev, through tireless efforts over the last 28 years like the great Bhageerata, has brought to us with parental love, the wisdom of our rishis and the glory of our culture. Gurudev is such a fine and kind teacher that even we children can understand his teachings. The inspiration created by Gurudev through the Yagnas is so great that the Prachar activities of the mission are serving all age-groups today. Thus, we have the study groups for parents and elders, Devi groups for mothers, Yuva Kendra for teenagers and Bala Vihars for children like us. Through the Bala Vihar, we are lovingly shown the goal of life, the way to live as dignified humans by the development of character. This is done through the study of Ramayana and Mahabharata and the great Bhagavad Geeta. The many stories of saints and sages of Bharat, who considered no sacrifice too great for living the ideal life and selflessly serving others, are our models. For all this, we offer our grateful Pranams to Gurudev. We extend our heartfelt prayers to Lord Jagadeeshwara to spare our Gurudev to guide and inspire us for many more years to come.

Our country was admired by the world for the greatness of its culture. The elders served as models for us in every walk of life. But unfortunately, today, it is very sad to note that the world is looking down upon the behaviour of our elders who are selfishly quarrelling with each other like children, for mere power and position! The ancient Rishi wisdom given by Gurudev is the only timely answer for such a situation. We are very fortunate that our dear Gurudev has so kindly agreed to shower his wisdom through the 300th Geeta Gnana Yagna. On behalf of the Yagna committee and all of you, I extend an affectionate and reverential welcome to Poojya Gurudev.

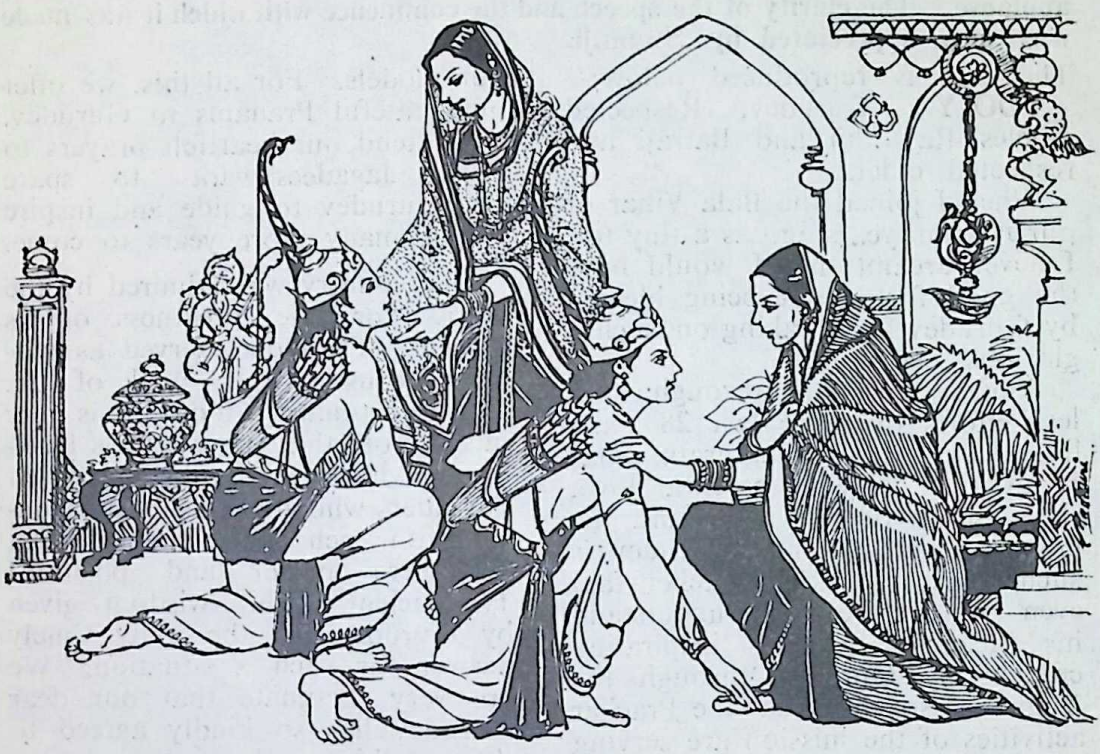
Last, but not the least, we extend a very warm welcome to one and all of you.

The lamp of Prachar was kept burning brightly by the oil of inspiration continuously provided by all of you.

We look forward to your continued support and co-operation in our Divine march ahead.

RAMAYANA
Ayodhya's Affectionate Send-Off

By Anantha Narayanan



Thus, bitterly regretting the hasty promise, King Dasaratha's deep attachment for Sri Rama made him go back on his promise, though he was fully aware of Viswamitra's temper.

Hearing the faltering words of retreat of the Dharmic King, Viswamitra's righteous anger immediately exploded in a flash, as the fire in a Yagna would leap up when it is fed with the offering of ghee!

The sage thundered thus : "O Dharmic King, having promised to grant the object of my request now you want to go back on your word! राघवाणां अयु-लोयं कुलस्यास्य विपर्यय This conduct is very unworthy of your Raghu race and will prove to be a blot on your noble tradition".

The sage added with biting sarcasm "If you consider your action to be proper, I shall return without Rama immediately, as I came. Having broken your promise, Kakustha! (Dasaratha of noble race), live happily with your relations". The sharp words of Viswamitra were almost a curse! The whole

ust like a mother to them. They ran into the house and told Aunt Sudha about the bird. Aunt Sudha got very angry with Kiran and told him. "It is good the bird is only unconscious. If you had killed it, it would become a sin". "Shall I bring a cage for it ?" asked Mira. "Never", said Aunt Sudha. "It is born free and you have no right to cage it. Go put it in the barn. Its leg has become twisted. Afterwards I'll put some balm on it. Now come let's eat food".

Days, weeks and months passed by. One day, before going to school, they went to see the bird in the barn. The bird was flying about now. With tears in his eyes, Kiran opened the barn window and saw it disappear into the sky.

While coming home from school, Mira asked Kiran "Where is your catapult ?" Kiran replied "I secretly destroyed it that same day. That injured bird taught me a lesson that every living creature has a right to be free".

ASSIMILATION OF VALUES IN LIFE BY CHILDREN

Swami Dayananda's speech at Rajapalayam

"We seem to attach importance to values in life only in relation to others. We want all others to speak the truth, not to steal property belonging to us, not to do anything that may hurt us physically or mentally. But when the question of applying this to ourselves comes in relation to others, we are not clear. This is because the values are half-assimilated. This results in our becoming split personalities", said Swami Dayananda Saraswathi at a well-attended gathering at the Ramasamy Raja Educational Campus, Rajapalayam on November 21st while declaring open the New Buildings of the Chinmaya Vidyalaya — P. A. C. Ramasamy Raja Higher Secondary School, a unit of the P. A. C. Ramasamy Raja Education Charity Trust here.

The beautiful wooded campus of 40 acres will have a residential school in the next two years for a limited number of students. At present, the academic buildings consisting of well-designed clusters of cottages housing classrooms for standards 6th to 12th, laboratories, staff rooms and the administrative block have been built. Construction ofhostels, library, workshops and teachers' quarters will be commencing soon. The accent in the educational programme will be on guiding the student to reach his peak performance through right methods of teaching, a balanced variety of co-curricular activities and physical education, helping the child to cultivate a respect for religion and Indian culture, a love for the nation, concern for the poor and also love of wildlife and nature.

Welcoming Swami Dayanandaji, Sri P. R. Ramasubrahmaneya Rajha, the Managing Trustee said that his dear father Sri P. A. C. Ramasamy Raja founded educational institutions and industries to help the people of Rajapalayam to serve the cause of nation-building. His family's devotion to Swami Chinmayananda Maharaj made them take the initiative to run the Chinmaya Vidyalaya on ideal lines so

earth shook and remembering their past experiences of Viswamitra's might, even the Gods were afraid of the sage's anger!

However, Viswamitra was in no mood to leave without Sri Rama. In the Ikshvaku race and according to the ancient Dharmic traditions of Bharat, principles were more important than personalities. Hence, no sacrifice was considered to be too great in upholding Dharma! Whenever there was a fear of breach of principles, the King's Guru saved the situation by timely advice.

Accordingly, seeing the alarm and panic, the wise and noble Sage Vasishta advised Dasaratha to keep his words and praised the greatness of Viswamitra and the true purpose of his request. The Sage addressed the King thus : "Being born in the Ikshvaku race, you have been fulfilling your Dharma so far. You should not abandon Dharma on any account. This will be unworthy of the Raghus. Having promised to do a thing, one should not go back. Therefore, send Rama with the sage. No Rakshasa can harm Rama when he is protected by Sage Viswamitra. For, he is an embodiment of Dharma and foremost in might and prowess! Besides, he is a vast storehouse of tapas and has a mastery over all missiles. This jewel amongst sages is a knower of the past and future! Hence O King, do not have any fear about sending Sri Rama with him. Though easily capable of destroying the Rakshasas by himself, Sage Viswamitra has come all the way of his own accord, seeking you and asking for Rama solely for the sake of blessing your son!"

In life, though objects and situations are the same for all, judgement and decisions are based on the vision of each person. Here, though Sri Rama is the same, King Dasaratha saw in him through attachment his dear and helpless son whereas the mighty Sages Viswamitra and Vasishta saw the Divine Rama through their tapas and detachment!

The Dharmic King Dasaratna's vision was thus corrected by his Guru and his fears disappeared like mist following the appearance of the sun. He felt delighted and, being an ideal disciple, decided immediately to send Sri Rama to please Sage Viswamitra.

Sri Rama and Lakshmana were sent for, as both were inseparable. Both the boys bowed down to the Queen Mothers and with their blessings reverentially approached Sage Vasishta and fell at his feet. Strengthened by the blessings of the Guru, which were accompanied by Vedic Mantras, they approached and prostrated to the King.

After lovingly embracing them with a full heart, Dasaratha delightfully handed them over to the care of Viswamitra! With a shower of flowers, the sound of conches and the beating of drums, entire Ayodhya watched with joy the first departure of their enthusiastic darling princes. The affectionate send-off marked the beginning of the victory march of the princes in the noble and divine company of the venerable Sage Viswamitra!

The supremely pleased Viswamitra took the lead and walked in front followed by the charming Sri Rama, adorned with beautiful side-burns and armed with a bow. As usual, Lakshmana followed Rama with bow in hand. Sage Valmiki excels in the description of this scene of the two leaving Ayodhya.

Viswamitra, with the boys, quickened his pace even without looking back, perhaps, not to give Dasaratha an opportunity to change his mind!!

अध्यर्धयोजनं गत्वा सरयूवा दक्षिणे तटे ।
गमेति मधुरां वाणीं विश्वामित्रो अभ्यभाषत

Having walked a distance of about twelve miles along the southern bank of the river Sarayu, Sage Viswamitra lovingly uttered the sweet word "Rama" to his heart's content.

Continued from Page No 22.

400 minutes. A target surely not impossible for a team that has thrice successfully crossed 400 runs? A little more plan, purpose and spine into India's second innings venture would have seen India registering a historic victory at Delhi. Only Yashpal Sharma, Kapil Dev and Viswanath displayed the kind of batting it takes to win Tests. Vengsarkar woke up to the fact that India could win towards the second half of his unbeaten innings. By then it was far too late. Vengsarkar, who got the man of the match award in Delhi, in the end made the difference between India winning and not winning by consuming valuable time.

I hope India has learnt its lessons at Delhi. The subsequent Tests will tell us.

— *Bharat Savur*

GOOD READING MATERIAL FOR CHILDREN AT THE BOMBAY BOOK FAIR

By Lalogue Postvala

ONE day in October, scanning the newspaper for her favourite TV programme, Priya Rasquinha (7) saw an advertisement about the Bombay Book Fair. Being fond of books, she pestered her father to take her to the fair.

The Bombay Book Fair was organised by the Bombay Booksellers and Publishers Association in collaboration with the National Book Trust. It was open for 11 days, from October 10 to 22, 1979. A unique feature of the Fair was that for the first time, good reading material for children had received a lot of attention.

To assess the reading habits of children and their interest in the books displayed at the stalls, the writer and the editor interviewed a few young visitors to the Fair.

On October 20, when we met Priya Rasquinha at the Fair near the Vikas Publishing House stall, she proudly showed us her attractive purchase—Animal Stories—Playmates published by Froebel Kan Co. Ltd., Tokyo. She is fond of fairly tales and animal stories.

Fairy stories enchant cute Tania Velu (5) too. Though she cannot read fluently, she can still tell many a tale by just looking at the pictures. Turning the pages of the Grimm's fairy tales book, picked up from the stall of Allied Publishers, she lisped out Cinderella's story. The apple of her grandparent's eye, (with

whom she had come to the Fair), she already possesses a tidy library. Most of the books are foreign publications.

Coming out of the Oxford Book House stall, we saw a young boy dressed in a beige colour half-sleeved shirt and shorts. He had a distinctive air about him—a person who knew what he wanted.

We gently tapped him on the shoulder and asked him whether he was searching for any particular book. Faheem Mitha (12) said, "Yes, I'm looking for Puffins. I can't find them." He reads a lot. His favourites are magical, adventurous fiction books.

"Hardy Boys and Alfred Hitchcock are my choice", stated Karim Alladin (10). He is from Hyderabad and was at the Fair for the first time. He found it very interesting.

Nasima Siwani (14) was visiting the Fair for the second time with her sister and cousin. She said that this Fair had helped her a lot. "I've come to know of many books—cookery, knitting etc." Fond of music, sports, and reading, her specials are Nancy Drew and Mills & Boon."

Another shy youngster, Vinoo Omman (10) at the Jaico Book stall said that his choice was Enid Blyton, Alfred Hitchcock, and books on general knowledge including inventions.

All the children interviewed were happy to be at the Fair. Some of them wished that there were more Book Fairs for children.

One significant factor which was evident from these interviews was that all the children were aware of Indian publications. They found Amar Chitra Katha and others entertaining, but they were great admirers of foreign books.

"This is not surprising", said Rita Goodman, Educational Representative of Allied Publishers. "Foreign authors make the books interesting—they are printed nicely, have attractive pictures, and the subject matter is so good", Rita added.

Admitting the superiority of foreign books for children because of better types and colours, Bipin Shah of India Book House, pointed out that much attention was also being paid in India. Amar Chitra Katha, Chimpu Series, Echo Books were gaining popularity not only in India but abroad. Many publishers today are constantly striving to bring out more attractive editions for children.

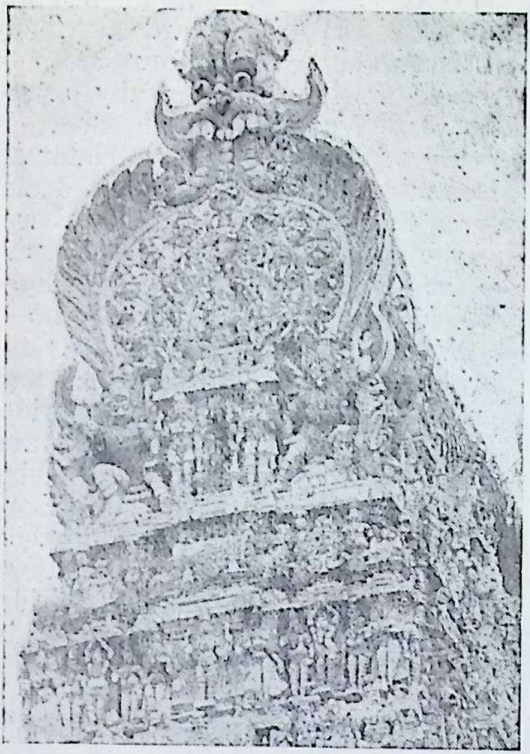
After all a book is the most important and varied product in the world. It transfers a wide range of thoughts to all types of people —thoughts which mould the minds of the children and influence the elders. And the book takes on the character of the ideas contained in it. It is therefore natural that the author, the publishers and the printer form vital links in the chain which creates good reading material for children.

Kindly note down your subscription number and quote it in all correspondence.

BHARAT DARSHAN

Meenakshi Temple-Madurai

By Dr. R. Vajreswari



A close-up of the top of the South Gopuram in the Meenakshi Temple.

Photo : Mr. Chockalingam

TO-DAY we will go into the temple, stopping now and then, to look at important treasures of art. Devotees follow a convention of offering worship first at the shrine of Devi Minakshi. We will follow the route that devotees take.

We enter by the east and there is a big hall with sculptures; there are paintings on the ceiling. There are pillars on the sides, each with the figure of a Goddess and there are Ashta Saktis (eight Goddesses). This hall leads to a huge hall with about 100 pillars, each of them with beautiful carvings. At present, on either side of this hall, there are shops selling flowers, bangles etc. Once they were used to house the elephants and horses. Then we move on and see the lovely Golden Lotus Tank which is huge. It is 165 x 100 ft. There are steps on all the four sides, leading into the tank. It is surrounded by spacious corridors, the walls of which contain many paintings.

As we enter the Devi shrine, we see the gold-plated, flag-staff and pass through the six-pillared small mandap. This is a historical mandap. In the first half of the seventeenth century, Thirumalai Nayak was the King, whose capital was Madurai. He carried out many reforms for the welfare of the people. He renovated the Minakshi temple and organised its festivals. He built a palace which is known as Thirumalai Nayak Mahal. A big tank (Teppa-Kulam) was constructed where the 'float festival' of Minakshi temple takes place annually. The king was a great devotee and patron of letters. A poet named Kumara-Kurubarar (one who was born deaf but became a poet

by the grace of Lord Muruga of Tiruchendur) came to the court. The king requested the poet to compose some verses on Devi Minakshi. Kumara - Kurubarar sang "Minakshi Amman Pillai Tamil", a beautiful composition describing the exploits of Minakshi as a young girl. The king organised a special function for the inauguration of the work in the six-pillared mandap in front of the Sanctum Sanctorum of Minakshi shrine.

While the poet was singing, lost in the Glory of Devi Minakshi, a small girl walked through the packed hall and sat on the lap of the king. She appreciated the songs of the poet and took a pearl necklace from the King's neck and gave it to the poet and disappeared. Everyone assembled was filled with joy because of the miracle.

The coronations of the Nayak Kings had been performed in this Mandap. The coronation of Devi Minakshi, one of the great annual festivals of the temple, is performed here.

We pass through this mandap and enter the hall leading to the Sanctum Sanctorum. From here, the devotee can worship Devi Minakshi, who stands, radiating love and compassion. After worshipping Devi, we go to the temple of Lord Sundareswara. On the way we see the great Vinayagar. The image is eight feet high. A single Mothaka (rice powder ball enclosing sweet paste) made of 24 measures of rice is offered to this Vinayaga on Vinayaga Chathurthi Day. Hence, the name Mukkuruni (name of 24 measures) Vinayagar.

The flag-staff in front of the Swami temple is enclosed by eight pillars. This is called Kambathadi Mandapam. These pillars are all finely sculptured. All the four sides of the pillars have wonderfully carved figures. We find Lord Siva in many forms such as Nataraja, Dakshinamurthi, Ardhanari, Kalahara, Sankaranarayana, Rishabarudar, Chandrasekara etc. The sculpture depicting the wedding of Devi Minakshi is a magnificent one.

We see the majestic Siva as the bride-groom; Minakshi is the shy, gracious and smiling Divine bride; Lord Vishnu is the happy and proud brother of the bride, giving away His sister in marriage to Lord Shiva. Below these three images, we see the sacrificial fire. Brahma is the chief priest of the wedding and He is assisted by many rishis. This is an exquisite jewel of a sculpture. If we study the pose of the deities, their facial expression, jewels, details of dress etc., we are astounded. There could be no doubt that it was a Master Sculptor who had a vision of the most important ritual of the Divine Wedding—giving away of the bride—who has given us this splendid and breath-taking, three—dimensional picture.

From the Kambathadi Mandap,

Just as rivers and seas receive the homage of mountain streams by keeping below them, so the sage receives the homage of men through his humility—

Jai Hind Oil Mills

387, Narsi Natha Street, Bombay-400 009.

we move on to the Swami shrine. As we go round the outer prakara, we find many shrines with important deities. To mention a few— Saraswathi, Siddhar, Durga, Lakshmi, Veerabhadra, Siva the Dancer and Bhadrakali dancing.

As in the Devi shrine, there is a six-pillared mandap in front of this shrine. Here also, a great literary work was inaugurated. Poet Paranjothi was chosen by Devi Minakshi to write the 'Thiru Vilayadal-Puranam'. It describes 64 'lilas' (miracles) performed by Lord Sundareswara.

Going through this mandap, we enter the hall leading to the Sanctum Sanctorum. On the right is the majestic image of Lord Nataraja. There is something unique about the dancing pose of this Lord. Generally, Lord Nataraja is seen with his left leg raised. Here you will see the Lord with His right leg raised. This change in the dance pose is explained by an interesting anecdote.

Pandian King Rajasekaran was a devout worshipper of Nataraja. The king was a master of many arts. To meet a challenge, he learnt Bharata Natyam. During the practice of the dance, he felt the strain and pain caused by the exacting art. He felt very unhappy about the Divine Dancer who stood eternally on his right leg, with the left leg raised. He rushed to the temple and implored the Lord to change His posture as His legs would be aching. Touched by the sincere concern of the king, the Lord changed His posture. The king offered prayers in moving verses and requested the Lord to give Darshan to the devotees in that pose.

We move on and there we behold Lord Sundareswara in all glory. You would remember that this Siva Lingam had been worshipped by Lord Indra who built the Vimana over the Lingam. You will notice that there are eight white elephants, two on each side of the Sanctum Sanctorum. (The white elephant is the Vahana of Indra).

Lord Sundareswara is believed to have performed many 'lilas' (miracles) and they are described in two Sanskrit works and one Tamil work —"Thiruvilayadal (miracle) Purana" describes 64 chosen 'lilas' of the Lord. He performed these for the sake of His devotees. These lilas reveal the Saulapya (simplicity) and Karuna (grace) of the Lord. He mingled with the people and came to their rescue at the hour of need. To mention a few of the miraculous roles of the Lord—the mud-carrier, the wood cutter, bangle seller, hunter, fisherman, jewel merchant, warrior, teacher, Siddha etc. The events connected with these roles move the devotee to tears, the poet to pour out his heart, the sculptor and painter to make them immortal. Many of these have been presented as lively sculptures on the walls of the Swami shrine. Some of these have become part of the annual temple festivals. They are re-enacted and represented in the most dramatic and enchanting manner. We will go into the details of these miracles later on.

Before we leave the temple, we

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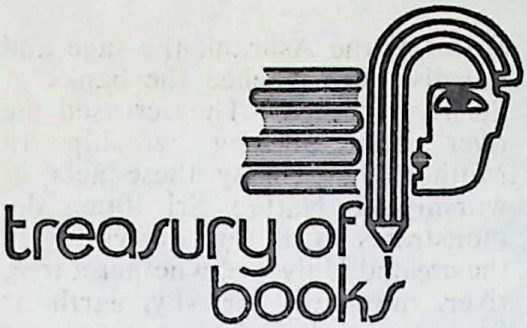

MYSTERY IN RANIPUR
By Cauvery
India Book House,
Pages: 109; Price: Rs. 6/-

FOR those of you who like reading mystery stories, (and I am sure many of you do), this is the right book. It gets off to a ringing start! And once you begin, you can go on and on till you reach the end. After all, you do want to know who stole the idol.

Here, we have four cousins called Anjali, Rathi, Niranjan and Dayanand. Rathi is an absent-minded little girl who gets these marvellous ideas for plots for stories. Dayanand is a high- spirited little boy.

Like all other children, they are always hungry! And like most children, they are always up to mischief!

To get down to the mystery—the idol of a Goddess is stolen from the temple at Ranipur, where the children are on a holiday. And our four little sleuths set out to find the thief. And who do you think it is? You can suspect so many people, but I wonder how many of you will guess the right one. Do write and tell me if you do.

— *Shalu.*

RAMAYANA

The Ideal Disciples

By Anantha Narayanan

SAGE Viswamitra felt extremely happy in the company of the charming princes, who followed the sage so cheerfully as his ideal disciples.

Before spending the night on the bank of the Sarayu river, the sage taught the boys two Mantras—Bala and Atibala. A Mantra is a hymn which, when chanted with devotion, protects the person. So these Mantras had the capacity to protect the boys from tiredness caused by hunger, thirst and exertion and also from any harm from outside.

The princes had been brought up in the luxury of the palace so far. In spite of the hardships of the forest life, the lads slept very soundly even on the lush, soft green grass under a tree!

Sage Viswamitra got up early before sunrise and wished to wake up the boys. However, he was very unwilling to disturb them for some time, as he was lost in the loving, sleeping beauty of Sri Rama! Sage Valmiki says that Viswamitra, after enjoying the enchanting sight to his heart's content woke up Sri Rama with a Suprabhatam thus :

कौसल्या सुप्रजा रामा पूर्वा सन्ध्या प्रवर्तते ।
उत्तिष्ट नरशार्दूल कर्तव्यं दैवमान्हिकम् ॥

"Kausalya is blessed indeed with a worthy son in you, O Rama!

The morning twilight has set in; therefore, get up, O tiger among men! for, contemplation of the Deity and the daily routine of duties (for the purification of the body) have to be gone through". If one dives deeper in the epic, many a time, one comes across the usage of words by the poet which are very beautiful and suggestive! For example, Sri Rama is addressed as कौसल्या सुप्रजा रामा (the obedient son of Kausalya). When he has just returned from Ayodhya after taking leave of King Dasaratha, what is the reason to refer to Sri Rama as son of Kausalya? It reflects the thoughts in this sage's mind about his admiration for Kausalya. For, earlier Dasaratha refused to part with Sri Rama at first, even after a promise. On the other hand, Mother Kausalya, who should feel more sad than the father, at the separation of such a darling son, readily gave permission and blessed Sri Rama!

Secondly, when the sage saw the serene, majestic beauty of the lotus face of Sri Rama, his thoughts naturally went to Mother Kausalya. She was so fortunate and blessed to have this glorious sight of Sri Rama every morning, since his birth! The Sage, therefore, felt grateful and admired the privileged Mother Kausalya, while addressing Sri Rama!

After prayer, the party started on their journey towards Kamashrama. Here, Lord Shiva reduced to ashes the God of Love (Kama), Manmatha, for disturbing His tapas.

Receiving the hospitality of the Rishis in the Ashram, the sage and the disciples reached the banks of the river Ganga. They crossed the river after offering worship to Mother Ganga. By these acts of worshipping Nature, Sri Rama demonstrates to us that everything in the created Universe, whether a tree, river, mountain, air, sky, earth or fire is sacred and meant for the well-being and welfare of all. If men do not live respecting the laws of nature and pollute the air, earth and water, out of their greed, Nature strikes back! Today, in this technological era, this ancient respect or worship is called ecology!!

Crossing the Ganga on a raft, they entered the thick forest, full of wild noises of beasts, known as Dandaka.

All along the journey, Sage Viswamitra kept his eager and curious disciples engrossed by affectionately explaining the history and geography of the places through which they passed. He explained that the once beautiful and peaceful Dandaka forest had become fearful due to the presence of the ugly monstress Tataka.

Tataka was a Yaksha woman, strong and beautiful, who was the wife of a Yaksha called Sunda and the mother of Mareecha. The great and powerful Sage Agasthya had cursed and destroyed Sunda for his misbehaviour with the sage. To seek revenge, Tataka and Mareecha attacked the sage and they were also cursed by him to become ugly man-eating monsters.

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Swami Vivekananda

THE STORY OF HIS LIFE

By Renuka Neogi

SWAMIJI learnt from experiences in life. At Banaras, as he came out of the Durga temple, many monkeys gave him a chase. An old monk standing nearby called out "Stop, face the brutes." The moment Swamiji did this, they ran away. Later on, he would say, "If you ever feel afraid of anything, always turn round and face it. Never think of running away."

Swamiji travelled throughout the land on foot to meet people and see how they lived. He was saddened by what he saw around him. There was so much ignorance and poverty everywhere. India then was under the British rule. A nation with a glorious past had sunk so low; her very spirit lay crushed and her people had lost faith in themselves. He remembered the great sages and saints and thought of how he could awaken the sleeping masses. In his opinion, India's greatness lay in her spiritual strength.

On the rocks in the sea beyond Kanya Kumari, he went into deep meditation. He realised what he had to do for his country. In a vision, he saw his Master walking on the sea and beckoning him to follow. He felt that it was his duty to go abroad and seek help from the materially advanced nations. For building a modern India, science and technology had to be borrowed. In exchange, he would share India's spiritual and cultural heritage with the West and spread the eternal message of Vedanta.

His disciples, including the Raja of Khetri, arranged for his trip to America, where he could attend the Parliament of Religions. On his arrival in America, he did not know a soul and had very little money with him but he had not lost

his courage and had full faith in God.

Help came from all quarters. Americans were astonished by his deep learning and wisdom and helped him to take part in the Parliament of Religions which began on Sept. 18, 1893. The hall was packed with nearly eight million men and women. There were more than sixty distinguished speakers from all the corners of the earth. Swamiji had never spoken to such a large gathering and he had not come prepared. He felt a little frightened at first. When he stepped forward on the platform, people were at once attracted by his ochre robes, his yellow turban, his glowing face and his regal bearing. He mentally prayed to Mother Saraswati and uttered the famous words "Brothers and Sisters of America."

This drew a thunderous applause. The audience went on clapping for very long. These words had power because they came from a heart which was full of love. When the cheering ended, he continued that he was proud to belong to a religion which accepted all other religions as true because they all led to the same God and that his country practised tolerance.

Overnight, he shot to fame. Newspapers spoke highly of him and his photographs appeared everywhere. India was little known to the West and many had wrong ideas about her. Through Swamiji, they came to know her better and to respect her.

Swamiji had tremendous concentration. On one occasion, he was watching some boys standing on a bridge and shooting at the egg shells bobbing up and down on the river below. Every shot went wrong. Finally , they gave a gun to Swamiji and told him to try. He fired twelve times and each time he hit a shell. They were amazed and wondered how he could do it. He replied, "Whatever you are doing, put your whole mind on it. If you are shooting, your mind should be on the target. Then you will never miss. If you are learning your lesson, think only of the lesson. In my country, boys are taught to do this."

But success did not go to his head. He was constantly thinking of his motherland. A great patriot, he said that the very dust of India had become holy to him.

One night a wealthy businessman made him his guest. Swamiji could not get a wink of sleep on the soft bed. He climbed down, and rolled on the floor shedding bitter tears and praying to Mother to show him how he could help the poor and the suffering in his land.

During his stay in America and England, he acquired many friends and disciples, the most notable of these being Sister Nivedita. She adopted India as her home and dedicated the rest of her life to the service of the people.

When Swamiji returned to India there was excitement all over the country. People gave him a welcome befitting a king. They honoured him, took him out in processions, arranged meetings and receptions. He gave stirring talks wherever he went.

He placed the ideal of renunciation and service before his people and taught them to serve God in man. He stated that it was not right for one man to have plenty to enjoy and another to starve as he believed that the same spirit dwelt in all.

Swamiji wanted the young to have a strong body, "with muscles of iron" and "nerves of steel" and an equally strong mind to know what was good and bad.

He built a monastery known as the Belur Math on the banks of the Ganges in Calcutta. He created the new order of Sannyasins in India. Brilliant young men joined the order ready to sacrifice their all. He also started centres in other parts of India. The monks opened hospitals, schools and served the sick and poor of all communities.

He was a tired man, his work having come to an end. His health was shattered. He spent his last days peacefully at Belur Math. His brother monks were very happy to have their beloved Swamiji back. He directed their work and supervised the training of novices.

On the evening of July 4, 1902, he sat down for meditation as usual, sang a bhajan in a charming voice to the Mother of the Universe, lay down on his bed and passed away. His prophetic words, "I shall never live to see forty" came true.

Though he has cast off his body, he has not ceased to work through others, and his life and teaching will continue to inspire millions the world over.

Concluded.

MEENAKSHI TEMPLE, MADURAI

Continued from Page 9

must visit the thousand-pillared hall. It is a treasure house of art. The hall is about 250 ft. square with 985 pillars with two small temples. The pillars appear in a straight line from whichever angle we view them. The sculptural beauties of these pillars have attracted lovers of art from all over the country and from abroad. The Department of Archaeology has organised a permanent exhibition of many interesting images in this hall.

The four main Gopurams (towers) contain hundreds of sculptures. The tallest of the Gopurams is the Southern Gopuram. It is 160 ft high. There are about 1500 sculptures in this Gopuram! One can spend hours gazing at these sculptures in the Gopurams.

There is an unfinished Gopuram in the east. The base of the Gopuram measures 170 ft. x 115 ft. and it has been built only upto 50 ft. It was begun in the seventeenth century. Had it been completed, it would have been the tallest Gopuram in the country!

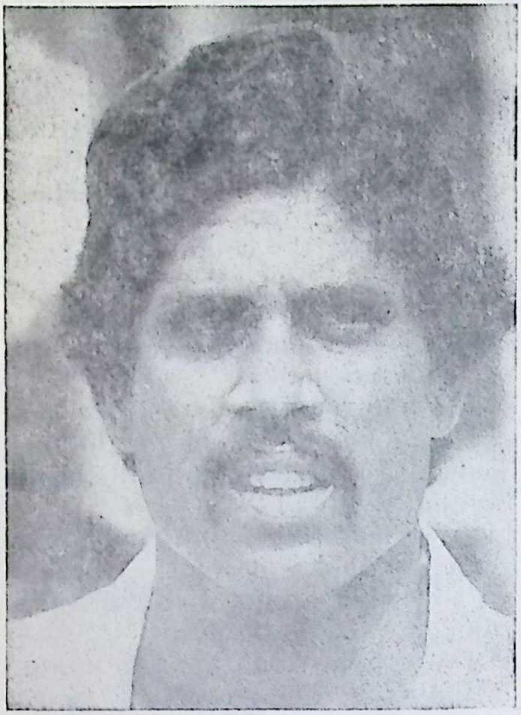
ANSWERS TO RIDDLES

1. Number 8.
2. A bubble.
3. Time to get the clock repaired.
4. Night falls aud day |breaks.

By Mahesh Hari Prabhu
(17 years.)

CRICKET

Pakistanis sandbagged at Bombay



KAPIL DEV : The man-of-the-match
Photo : Courtesy Sportsweek

Hello Sportslovers!

India's win at Bombay, the venue of the third Test against Pakistan, was a logical extension of her second inning's effort at Delhi - which had left them a few runs short, in a belated victory-bid. India avenged her defeats at Lahore and Karachi last year, twice - over by crushing Pakistan by an innings with over a day left. The sweet taste of revenge and well-deserved victory was soured by a substandard pitch. Gavaskar won the toss and in doing so won the match by his decision to bat first. Imran Khan, who played inspite of a nagging back injury, was nursed by Asif Iqbal who bowled him in short spells. Gavaskar was the first to go when he mistimed a pull. Chauhan, who had never looked comfortable, followed. Both were the victims of Sikandar Bakht. One ball from Imran Khan to Viswanath jumped upto his face from the good-length spot : evidence that the pitch was unsafe for batsmen - and that too in the first hour of the first day's play.

Kapil Dev, the man-of-the-match at Bombay, was the only batsman who mastered the bowling, or rather the pitch. He did this by using his feet and getting the ball on the half - volley. In other words, by hardly allowing the ball to pitch. His strokeful sixty-nine won the match for India, not forgetting for a moment his great bowling efforts in both the innings. I say this because bowling is pretty easy on a pitch like the Wankhede : bowl on a spot and the pitch does the rest.

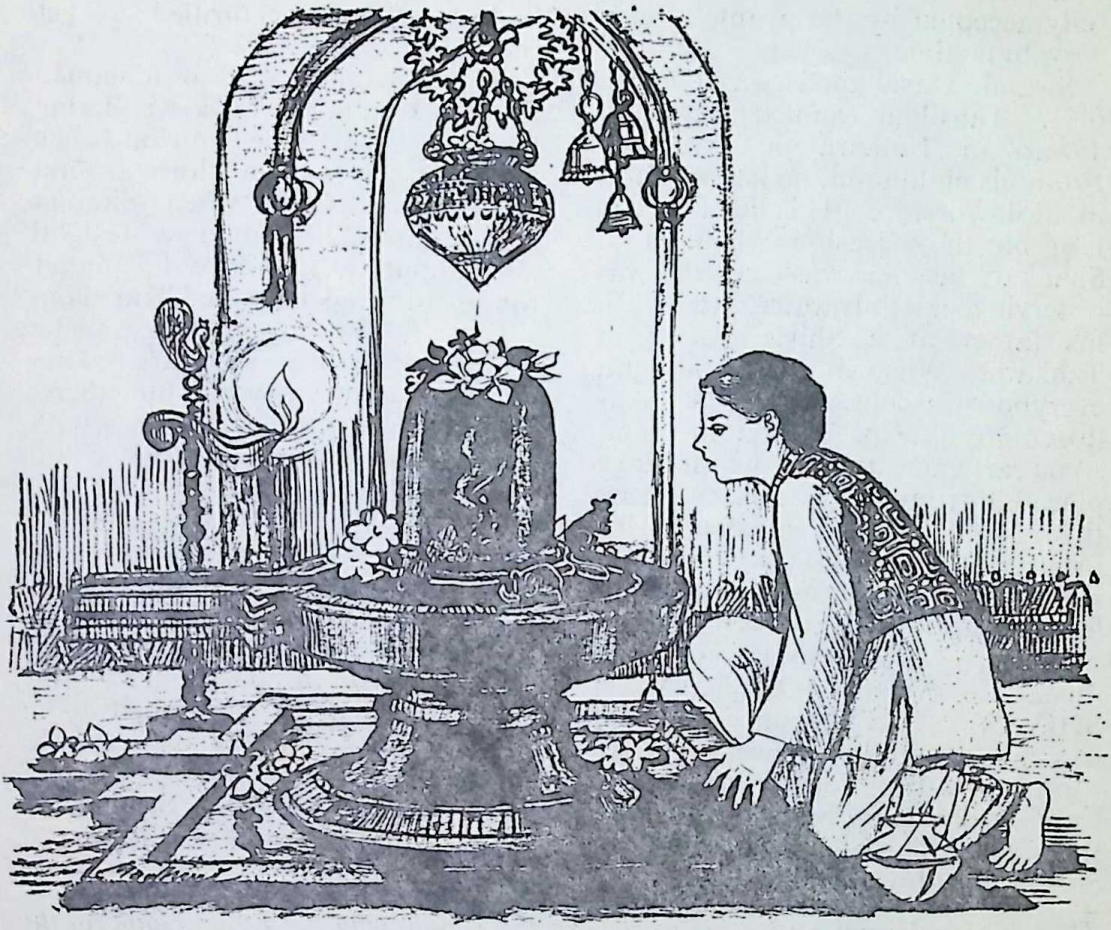
Surprisingly, the Pakistani strokemakers, in their own rights, could not emulate Kapil Dev. There was an air of desperation, a hint of defeat in the strokes they played, as if they had already lost the match. And finally, as someone said, the man-of-the-match award should have been given not to Kapil Dev but to the pitch.

—Bharat Savur.

Swami Dayananda Saraswathi

By K. Madhu

SWAMI Dayananda Saraswathi was born in 1824. He was enlightened on Maha Shivaratri which falls on 14th February this year. K.Madhu tells you all about him.



Dayananda Saraswathi was a great man, who realized the abominable state of affairs in our country when Bharat was under the British rule. He tried to develop Bharat by abolishing child marriage, discrimination of castes, untouchability etc. He was the great man who

established the Arya Samaj in India. His aim was to make the people good and honest and create among them a feeling of unity and brotherhood. He did not believe in idol worship, because in his opinion, the Vedas did not sanction it. He wanted women to learn the Vedas and also have the same opportunity that men had but these ideals were only accepted by the people after a very long time.

Swami Dayananda was the son of a Tahsildar named Karshanji Tiwari in Tankara in Gujarat. From his childhood, he had no faith in idol worship. This idea struck him on the occasion when Mool Shankar, as he was called, was observing a Shivaratri fast with his father at a Shiva temple in Tankara. When it was midnight, everybody except Mool Shankar dozed off to sleep. At that moment, some rats came and ate the offerings placed in front of the Lord. Seeing this, Mool Shankar awakened his father and asked him why an idol which was worshipped was helpless against mere rats. His father, half-sleepy, asked Mool Shankar to repeat the Mantra (OM NAMAH SHIVAYA) and to concentrate on it. But he couldn't concentrate and soon lost faith in idol worship. He went back to his house and broke the fast. Thus he became an enemy of idol worship.

When proposals of marriage came for him, he bid farewell to his parents and went off at midnight to find a perfect Guru. Then the greedy sadhus who were interested in his gold ornaments asked him why a person who had renounced the world, wore them. Mool Shankar immediately took the ornaments off and gave them to the Sadhus who were thrilled to get them.

Mool Shankar was soon named Shudha Chaitanya by a wandering monk. From then onwards he wore only a saffron cloth around his waist. Once when Shudha Chaitanya was visiting a festival at Sidhpur, a friend of his father found him and informed Karshanji Tiwari of his son's presence. The father and his men soon arrived on the scene and discovered him there. They locked him up in a room with two guards outside it, for they could not continue their journey as darkness had fallen. By midnight, the guards fell asleep and making use of this opportunity, Shudha Chaitanya escaped. On his way, he met Swami Poornananda's party and the Swami himself named him Dayananda. He resumed his journey and was shocked to see the intolerance around him.

At last he found a really great Guru who enlightened him and

Continued on page 20

The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and if they can't find them, make them—

With Best Compliments From

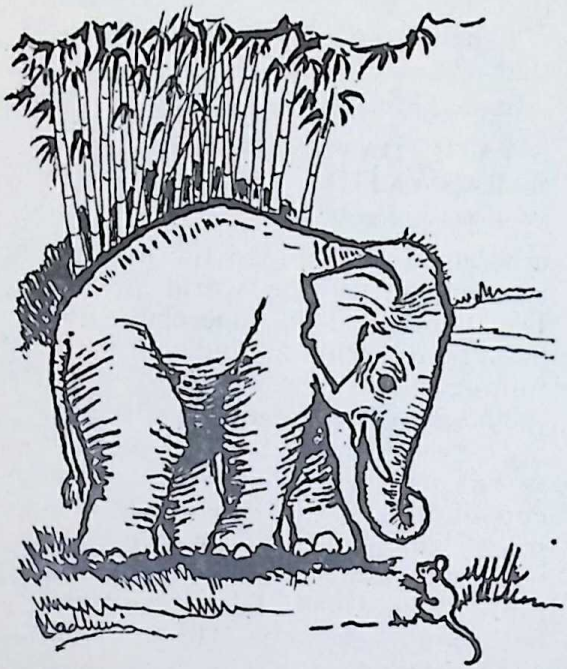
Lekha, Seema and Chitra

(Cannanore Bala Vihar members)

Make Friends With All

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

By Lalogue Postvala



IN the middle of a forest close to a river was an abandoned hermitage. The houses and the temples were not occupied by anyone. They were empty because the hermits had moved on to the mountains. No one came near these crumbling buildings except the mice. They were, after all, old settlers.

These mice were a happy lot. The young ones spent their time playing games, like hide-and-seek or by running up and down the tree trunks, while the older ones rested under the lush foilage. Undisturbed, their tribe increased.

However, one day, misfortune ended their peaceful days. A big herd of elephants in search of water passed by the ruins. On their way to the river, they unknowingly stamped on the tiny creatures. Many mice were killed.

The frightened survivors then sought out their leader. They cried out to him in one voice, "We're being crushed to death in thousands by these lumbering elephants. If they continue using the path near our house, soon there will be no mice left".

The wise old mouse comforted them, "Don't be so frightened, my friends. I'll take care of your problems."

So saying, he selected a few stout-hearted fellows and went with them to the elephant-king.

As they respectfully bowed to the king-elephant, the elder mouse said, "O king, not far from here lives our community. 'We've stayed here a long time. Now you gentlemen , while coming to the river, have destroyed us by the thousand. If you keep trekking this way, our whole colony will be wiped out."

The mouse added, "Have pity on us. Do take another path. Who knows, small as we are, we too may be of some service to you someday."

The elephant-king thought a while and granted their request. Thereafter both the tribes existed happily side-by-side.

Sometime later, a nobleman from nearby kingdom, wanting elephants for his army, hired elephant-trappers to catch the elephants.

Since the elephants are generally caught when they are in the water, the trappers built water-traps in the river by the ruins. They had received the information earlier from one of the hunters that a large herd of elephants went there daily.

That evening when the king-elephant with his retinue walked into the river, all of them were trapped.

Three days later, the hunters, with thick ropes and iron tackles, dragged the hungry and tired elephants to the shore. They then securely tied the ropes to stout trees, and returned to the city.

By now the king-elephant had realised that only his mice-friends could free them from this trap.

When the men had departed, the king-elephant called out to an elephant cow, who had not entered the watertraps. He told her to go to the mouse colony and report their plight to the mouse-leader.

On hearing the sad story, the wise mouse summoned the other mice. They went in thousands to the place where the elephants were fettered. The small mice quickly gnawed through the ropes and set the big elephants free.

Thus it is wisely said in the Panchatantra—Make friends, make friends, however strong or weak they be.

Recall the captive elephants, that mice set free.

SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATHI

Continued from page 18

advised him to spread the message of Vedanta to the world of sin. Dayanandaji held speeches and debates on religion and won many followers.

The British were getting annoyed. So they asked the Swami's servant to mix powdered glass in his usual cup of milk. The British Government handsomely rewarded the wicked servant for carrying out the job. Dayanandaji fell ill and nobody could save him. He soon died at Ajmer on 30th October, 1883. Before his death, the servant came to confess his guilt and Dayanandaji forgave him.

We should really be proud of our brave and religious ancestors who were the real sons of the motherland and who tried hard for freedom from foreign domination.

The secret of being miserable is to have the leisure to bother about whether you are happy or not—

Vijay Corporation

65, Ideal Ind. Estate, Mathuradas Mills Compound Lower Parel, Bombay-400013.

PROBLEMS?

DO you have a problem? If you do, please write and tell us. We shall try and solve it. Remember, two heads are better than one, so don't worry. Write a letter and pass your worries on to us.

You need not be afraid about your names being published. If you don't want your name to appear in Bal Vihar, please write and tell us and we shall not disclose it.

Don't forget to mention your age and the class which you are in. This will help Kamath uncle to give the correct solution to your problem.

Dear Kamath Uncle,

I am in Std. VII. I am very poor in Mathematics. I have a public exam this year. I have no need to worry about my other subjects, I am only afraid of Maths. I always expect to get 70% at least but even if I do my best, I get only 50%. Please tell me how to solve this problem.

Yours sincerely
Annapurna

Dear Kamath Uncle,

1. *I am an eighth standard student. As I don't understand Maths, I hate it. My mother asks me to do sums daily. I tell her I will do them after eating. After eating, I go to play. After playing, I come home, study something, then go to sleep. Daily the routine continues. This is my problem. What shall I do?*

2. *Please solve this problem.*

If "X" books cost Rs. "P", what is the cost of "Y" books?

Yours sincerely
V.P.S. Srinivas

Dear Annapurna and Srinivas,

Both of you have the same difficulty—mathematics. In fact many, many students are not fond of this subject. What is the result? The other day I bought a newspaper worth 40 paise. I paid one rupee. For the change of 60 paise the seller extended his whole box of earnings—"Please take back your change." I picked up my 60 paise and not more. He did not know mathematics. What a pity! Anybody could easily cheat him. Now, is it not obvious to you that everyone needs to know mathematics—whether a newspaper boy or a musician, a doctor or an engineer? The person who designs a satellite and also a poet need mathematics. Even a cricketer should know numbers. But students need it the most: to multiply their marks, add to their joys, subtract their sorrows and divide their worries.

A friend of mine, one day, discovered that all his friends were scoring 80 or 90 in maths. He was at the bottom of the class -only 50

Money can buy good education but not intelligence—
Chinmaya Family—Kuwait

or so, with only four months to go for his crucial examination. If he did not score well in mathematics, he would not realise his dream of becoming a scientist. "I must score a century (100 marks)", he said to himself. He began to practise sums daily. Just as a cricket fan is always with his bat and ball, my friend was with his book and pen. He did not rest at all. One text book after another he finished in no time. He purchased a few more mathematics textbooks than his friends.

At first he found it difficult. Why, he did not even know the multiplication tables! So he started with the multiplication tables. At least one kilogram of paper he must have used for solving sums—again and again. Whenever he did not understand anything, he approached his teacher or friends. Finally he wrote the examination and got his results. Do you know how much he scored? A person who scored 39% once had scored 93%!

Shouldn't we all follow his example? How did he succeed? By (a) Regular effort (b) Starting from the very beginning (multiplication tables) (c) Seeking help from teachers (d) Studying more books on his weak subject.

As regards your second question dear Srinivas, the answer is $Y \times P/X$. Because if X books cost P rupees, one book will cost Rs. P/X. Therefore Y books will cost YP/X rupees. Nothing is impossible, my friends! If you try hard enough you too can make a record ...a century?

Yours affectionately

Kamath Uncle.

HELEN KELLER

By Amrita Neogi (14 years)

HELEN Adams Keller was born in 1880. She was an American writer and lecturer, blind and deaf from infancy, as a result of scarlet fever. As a young child, Helen could not be controlled. She often grew furious, broke things by flinging her limbs about and screamed.

When she was eight years old, she was placed under the care of Anne M. Sullivan, who remained with her constantly. She soon learnt to read and write and use the finger alphabet. Within a month, she could also speak fluently. Her progress was remarkable.

In later years, she completed her education, and served many Institutions for the blind. She was widely known as a lecturer. Helen Keller wrote many books of her own experiences, and of the possibilities of a rich intellectual life for the deaf and blind like "The Story of My Life", "Optimism", "The world I live in" and "Out of the dark".

Though she was blind, her other senses were very sharp. Once she had gone with Anne to buy jewellery. In the shop, she suddenly told Anne that she could sense that someone there loved her very much. True enough, it was found that, standing behind them was a lady who was staring at Helen, and was admiring her greatly. Helen Keller was like a tree with half foliage, standing in barren land, and not stooping down against strong winds.

THE IMPOSSIBLE TASK

By Sumit Sadana (10 years)

PERSEUS was a very handsome boy who lived in an island with his mother, a princess. Now as Perseus grew up to be a young man, he became so brave and so daring that the chief of the island grew jealous of him. So jealous did he become that he wanted to get rid of him if he could. "I will send him on such a great errand that he will never come back alive," thought the wicked chief. So one day he sent for the young lad and began to flatter him. "I have heard how brave and daring you are. I like brave and daring men so I have made up my mind to entrust you with a very difficult task." The chief continued, "I want you to find out for me where the three terrible Gorgons live. And when you have done that you must kill Masuda, the chief of the three and bring back her head to

me". After thinking for a little while, Perseus agreed.

Now the Gorgons were three terrible sisters. They were half dragons and half women. Their bodies were covered with silver scales and instead of hands they had claws. The worst thing was that instead of hair on their heads, they had hundreds and hundreds of slithering snakes. And no one knew where they lived.

It was almost an impossible task. But wait!! As the young boy was walking along the road, he met a handsome stranger. He had wings attached to his legs and his body was shining. He was none other than Mercury, the messenger of Gods! "Why are you looking so sad, Perseus?" asked Mercury. Perseus told Mercury all about the chief and his promise.

Mercury said, "You will succeed if you do as I say". Perseus agreed. Mercury continued, "you should have my winged shoes. They will help you to fly wherever you want. Then you should have my crooked sword, which will help you to cut off Masuda's head. From my friend Pluto, I shall borrow a helmet. When you wear that helmet you will be invisible. From my friend Minerva, shall borrow a golden shield which will act as a mirror and you will be ab'e to see through it without actually looking at Masuda's eyes. You should also have a goat skin bag to hide Masuda's head because even after death, she will have the power to change man into stone." After some time, Perseus saw Mercury coming with all the gifts in his hand. He gave them to Perseus. Before Perseus had time to thank the God, he disappeared.

Smiling over his good fortune, Perseus left. Mercury had told him to go first to the cave of the three grey sisters because they and they alone knew where the three Gorgons lived. So, he put on the winged shoes, carried the sword in his hand and put the helmet and the shield in the goatskin bag. Then, "Wink your eyes and blink your eyes" and there was our great hero up in the air, straight to the cave of the three grey sisters. Down he came to earth just outside the cave.

Now, the strange thing about these sisters was that they had only one eye and one tooth between them. They used them in turns. Just then, the eldest sister came to the mouth of the cave to tell the sisters all that she could see happening in the world. After some time all the three sisters began to quarrel, "You have had the eye for long enough, sister," cried one. "No, it is my turn now," said the other. The eldest sister took out the eye and tried to pass it to the second one. But before she could do so, Perseus whipped out of the hiding place and snatched the eye away. The sisters began to scream and to scramble for it. But before they could touch it, he was up in the air again. "Your eye is safe with me, sisters. I will not give it back until you tell me where the three Gorgons live." They were lost without the eye. So, they blurted out where the three Gorgons lived. Then Perseus gave them back their eye and he rose in the air like a bird.

Over lands and seas he flew until at last he was hovering over the island of the Gorgons. Putting on the helmet so that he could not be seen, he held up Minerva's shield like a mirror. He could see far, far below him, the three Gorgons sitting in a row. They seemed to be asleep. Then when he reached the earth, still looking in the shield, he drew near Masuda and cut off her head. Her head rolled on the ground with the snakes hissing angrily. He quickly brought the head to the edge of the sword and then hid its horrors in the goat-skin bag.

The noise woke the other two sisters. They tried to seize him with brazen claws but, "wink your eyes and blink your eyes" and our great hero was up in the air again. Perseus returned home safely. He asked for news and was told that the chief of the island had treated the people and his mother very cruelly. Perseus got very angry and knew why the chief had sent him on such a dangerous errand. He went to the chief's palace and he saw the chief having dinner with his friends.

As soon as the chief saw Perseus, he turned pale. Thinking he had failed in his task, the chief shouted, "Oho! my boy, so you have not succeeded in my task." Perseus looked straight into the chief's eyes "I did not fail", he said quietly. "But, but, you could not have killed Masuda," the chief said. "Behold the head of Masuda!" shouted the youth and he drew forth the hideous head and held it out high. The chief and his other friends instantly turned into stone. The people thanked and praised Perseus and hailed him as their hero.

Annual Gathering of Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Jayalakshmipuram

The Annual Gathering of the Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Jayalakshmipuram (Mysore) was celebrated recently. Baby Priyamvada Lakshminarayan of the first standard won the first prize in the fancy dress competition. She was dressed up as Goddess Andal. The Chief Guest, Sri H. N. Ramathirtha, the President of the local Chinmaya Mission and Partner, Arvinda Parimala Works gave away the prizes. Principal Smt. Shamala Srinivas welcomed the gathering.

My Adil's Horse

Tick Tock! Tick Tock!
Runs my Adil's horse
Down the valley
Through the alley

A horse so strong
never dallies—
Not for a crop
Nor for a hop

Will he stop
He runs and neighs
and quickly obeys
His master's voice.

Jeroo Gheewalla

WHO IS MORE POWERFUL?

TENALI Rama was one of the courtiers in the court of King Krishna Devaraya. He was the cleverest among the courtiers and therefore, very dear to the king.

The other courtiers were jealous of him. They tried to make him feel small in the presence of the king. But Tenali Rama outwitted them.

Tenali Rama was a person who could succeed against all odds. He was a man of spirit and humour. Not only did he manage to escape from the net but he also trapped those people who wanted to trap him.

One day, the king did not come to the court in time. Everyone began to think that the king was not well. After half an hour, the entrance guard announced that the king was coming.

The people got up as the king entered the court. He went straight to his throne and occupied it. The courtiers were wondering what was wrong with the king. Their anxiety was justified because the king looked disturbed.

He began to address them, "Oh revered ones! Since last night, I am disturbed by a doubt. I tried my best to figure it out till midnight. When I felt that I could do nothing in this matter, I went to sleep. That is the reason for my coming late." Everyone began to think that the matter was very serious because it was disturbing the king too much. They listened carefully. The king continued, "I want to know who is more powerful, is it God or the king? Please give me an answer."

People did not expect the doubt to be of this type.

The answer was very simple. It is a well known fact that God is more powerful than the king.

But nobody had the courage to say this because it would annoy the king. While everyone was hesitating, Tenali Rama got up and addressed the king, "Oh Lord! The king is more powerful than God, because he can banish the guilty, but God cannot." People were surprised at this answer.

The king was very pleased with his answer. He asked, "Why cannot God banish the guilty?"

Tenali explained, "It is very well known that when a person is banished he is taken away from the kingdom and left in a place which does not fall under the rule of the king. Since God's kingdom is everywhere, He cannot banish the guilty."

By Br. K. Mani

YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE

Subscribers are requested to quote their subscription No. (the first line of the address on the wrapper) in all their correspondence including Money Orders and Cheques sent for renewal. Omissions to do so will naturally entail delay in dealing with such correspondence and renewals.

The Ideal Disciples

Continued from Page 12

These two monsters were now residing in Dandaka, creating havoc and terror to the Rishis of the forest.

As Viswamitra was narrating the story there was a great commotion in the forest, followed by loud, fearful screams! The sage immediately alerted Sri Rama stating that Tataka was approaching them and asked him to kill her. Sri Rama saw an ugly mountain of a woman charging towards them.

Sri Rama hesitated a little as it was against Kshatriya Dharma to kill a woman. The sage explained to Sri Rama that she was a cruel cannibal with the strength of many elephants and she had created terror like a wild beast. Hence, it was his duty as a king to punish the wicked and protect the good.

Remembering his father's command, the obedient son and devoted disciple, Sri Rama struck down the monstress Tataka with a deadly arrow after a brief fight!

Overcome with joy, Viswamitra affectionately hugged and blessed Sri Rama. The Devas praised the noble deed of the valorous Prince of Ayodhya!

Yagna Protected

After spending the night, they moved forward to the hermitage of Viswamitra, known as Siddashrama.

The Sage was so happy with Sri Rama that he lovingly taught him how to use all the Divine Astras (missiles) which he had acquired during his career of austere tapas. Sri Rama in turn taught Lakshmana.

In the ancient language of weaponry, one comes across two terms —Sastra and Astra. Sastras are weapons to be wielded and handled manually. Astras, which are divine and more powerful, are propelled and controlled by Mantras, as fuel, like the remote controlled electronic devices. These could be discharged, controlled and recalled at will by a person having mastery over the Mantras ! Thus, in the ancient days, the art of warfare, both offence and defence, was very well perfected through the agency of tapas!

The inspired, equipped and eager Sri Rama was anxious to know about his next task, to be of service to his guru. He, therefore, respectfully enquired of the sage the nature of the Demons, who disturbed the Yagna and the means of destroying them.

First Viswamitra gave a detailed account of the history of Siddashrama, where Lord Narayana in a previous Avatara, had performed tapas as Vamana.

To be Continued.

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Next month—Look out for CRICKET QUIZ!

Think !

Love and labour go hand in hand. Where there is love, labour becomes a joy.

—Swami Chinmayananda

When work is done without love, it becomes a tiring effort. However if it is inspired by love, work becomes an expression of joy. This is the thought for the month.

Based on it, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Balvihar. The last date for sending in entries is April 15th, so send your entry soon. Kindly note that the entrants should not be more than fifteen years old.

The Winner !

The Winner of the thought for the month of December is K. P. Radha of Dohad (15 years). Congratulations, Radha! We have sent you "Tell me a story-Part I and II" as a prize. Hope you enjoy reading them !!

A Grumbler Comes to Grief

By K. P. Radha

On the bank of the river Sarita, there lived an old woman and her son Ram. They had a small farm behind their hut in which they grew vegetables. They also had a few sheep whose milk they sold in the market.

Ram was a very lazy boy. His mother would tell him nearly every day to do some work and help her. But he would complain that he had a lot of home work to do and could not spare the time. His mother desired that he should become a learned man and so she did not force him. At school, Ram never did any work saying that he was the only son at home and so he had to do all the work.

As the rainy season was drawing near, Ram's mother told him to build a wall around their house and a pen for the sheep. The level of the water in the river Sarita would rise and there was the possibility of a flood, in which the whole house

could be swept away. But Ram said that he was too busy with other things and so had no time. He said, "I have no time mother. But don't you worry. It won't rain heavily and there will be no flood".

A few days passed when they received the news that Ram's grandmother was seriously ill. They had to leave at once. They visited Ram's grandmother and stayed there for a few days, till she recovered. The rainy season had already started when they left her house.

Two days later, when they reached home, they beheld a horrible sight. There had been a flood in the river Sarita and the water had entered their hut. All their sheep had died and the vegetables were ruined. The house was in a dilapidated state. Ram could not believe his eyes. He realised that he was responsible for this destruction. If only he had listened to his mother's advice and built the wall, their house would not have been in this condition.

He repented sincerely and made up his mind never to complain again. He himself made a new house, when the rains were over. He worked as hard as a slave and collected enough money to buy some sheep. He built a shelter for them. He started going to school regularly and paid full attention. He was no longer the lazy, complaining Ram. He had become hardworking and energetic, finding enough time to act, win and achieve.

Words

Sympathising words console hearts'
Sorrow at once departs.
They bring immediate cheer,
And drive out the feeling of fear!

Words, harsh and rude,
Won't make souls cool,
They bring envy from nowhere,
And spread hatred everywhere!

Remember, words are like "daggers"
How you use them always matters,
So, whatever you want to express,
Don't forget, sweet words impress!

By Narayani Ramamoorthy
(13 years)

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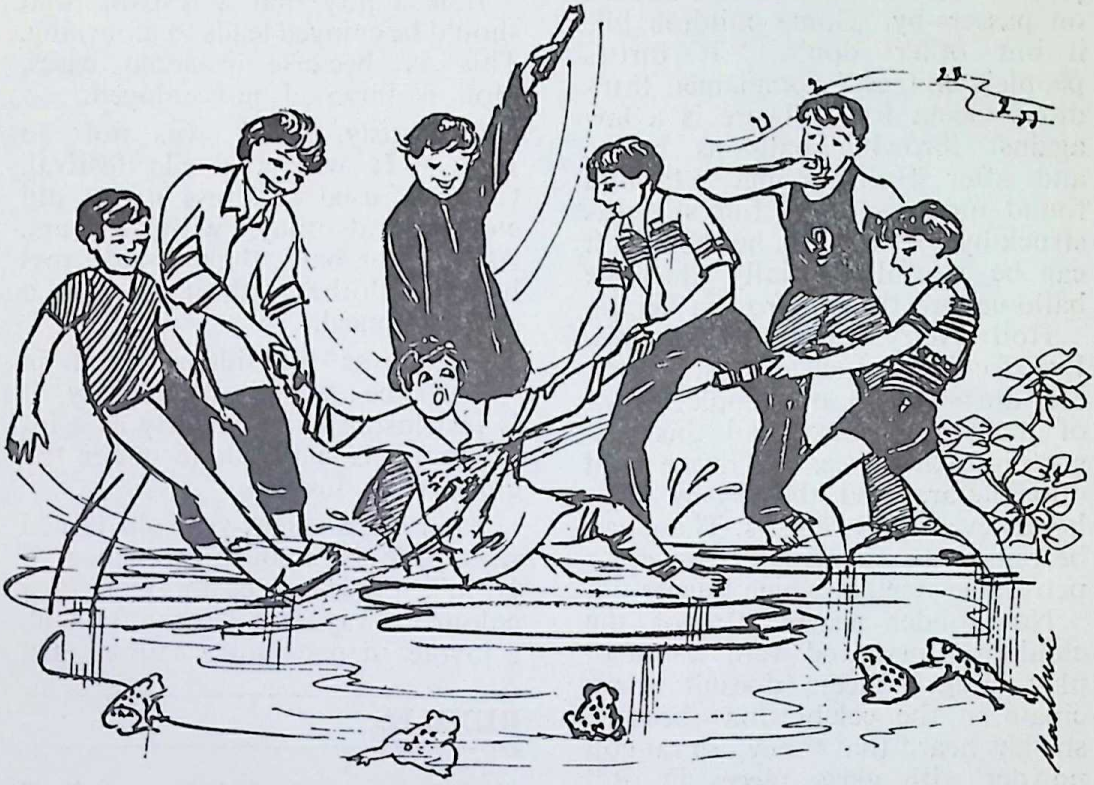
Editor,
Bal Vihar.

HOLI—A FESTIVAL OF JOY?

By Parimala Inamdar, Nilima Kagal, and Usha Rao



HOLI marks the advent of spring and gaiety. It is celebrated on the full moon day in the last month of the Hindu calendar - Phalgun. There is joy everywhere! Farmers sing their happy refrains and children dance in glee. Dry colours are seen flying all around. "There are almost continuous showers of coloured water pouring down from different directions", according to Sheila Gandhi (14).

In the olden days, even enemies got together and rejoiced. There was no distinction between people of various castes and creeds on this occasion. They used to colour each other and sing songs.

However today some people regard it as an opportunity to wreak vengeance. "We can harass others to avenge wrongs," said naughty Kandarp Vaishnav (13). But this attitude seems to have got

him into trouble. Last year, on Holi, he was dragged to a filthy pond filled with frogs and dipped in thrice. This was done by a gang of ruffians.

Yet children persist in playing pranks. Water balloons are thrown on passers-by. Some children like it but others don't. "It dirties people's clothes," complained fastidious Geeta Rao. There is a law against throwing balloons before and after Holi. Roma Prabhu found out this only after she was struck by a balloon on her head. It can be painful especially when the balloons are thrown from a height.

Holi revelry doesn't stop at this. Even foodstuffs such as eggs, falooda etc. are smeared on people. Two of the writers have had this disgusting experience. Grease and oilpaints are used liberally by vagabonds even on strangers. These can be removed only with kerosene or petrol, the smell of which lingers on.

No wonder nearly 30% of the children interviewed were scared to play Holi. Geeta doesn't participate in the celebrations because she has heard that "they use rangoli powder with glass pieces in it."

Most of the children considered gulal (the red powder) poisonous. "It leads to cancer," said Kandarp, voicing his fears. According to others, it causes blindness. "I am cautious about colour," said Jayant Jhaveri (10). He always protects his eyes.

Their fears are justified by a newspaper report stating that two children had died of colour poisoning and many more had been hospitalised. Colours can be harmful if they go into the mouth.

It is a pity that a festival that should be enjoyed leads to mourning. This is because in some cases, Holi is imposed not enjoyed.

Previously, Holi was not so wild. It was a docile festival. Children used to dress up in old clothes and play with colours. After a hot bath, they would dress in clean clothes and sit down to a delicious meal.

Holi was considered next in importance to Diwali. Today it is fast losing its popularity as a lot of wrong is being done under the cloak of a festival.

After all, as eight-year old Prachi says "life is colourful because of Holi." So let us celebrate it in a colourful way, not a harmful one, a joyous manner not a callous one.

RIDDLES

1. Why is a clock like a soldier?
2. When does a glass of water cry?
3. Why is a bank cashier like a steno?
4. What is bought by the yard and worn by the foot?

Answers on Page 11

The thoughts I give out did not come to me after long argument, but after long experience—

With Best Compliments From
Lekha, Seema and Chitra
(Cannanore Bala Vihar members)

BHARAT DARSHAN

ALAGARKOIL AND MURUGAN KOIL MADURAI

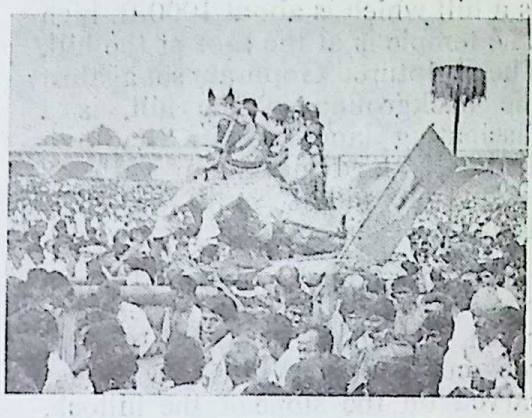
By Dr. R. Vajreswari

BEFORE we take leave of Madurai, we must visit two of the important temples, closely connected with the Minakshi Temple. One is a Vishnu shrine and the other is a Muruga temple.

Twelve miles east of Madurai is an enchanting hill. In the picturesque setting of green vegetation, there is a beautiful Vishnu shrine. The deity is known as Sundararajan (Alagar—the Beautiful One). He is specially worshipped by a group of people called "Kallars". Hence the Lord is also known as Kall-Alagar, the Lord of the Kallars.

There are historical evidences to show that there must have been a big city near the temple. King Tirumalai Naicker had a palace in Madurai and it is now known as Tirumalai Naicker Mahal. We will visit it later on. The king had built a palace at Alagar hills also and lived for a few months in that place every year.

The Utsavamurthi (the processional deity) of the temple is of pure gold. True to His name, the charm and beauty of Alagar is something indescribable. Decked with all jewels and with great pomp and glory, He makes a trip to Madurai once a year. He comes to participate in the wedding of His Sister, Devi Minakshi. The five days of



Alagar on the golden horse, entering the Vaigai river.

Photo : Mr. Chockalingam

His visit to Madurai and the return journey are full of grand, symbolic and significant functions. Thousands of devotees throng to get a few glimpses of the glories of the Lord. The greatest of these functions is on the full-moon day of Chitrai, the first Tamil month (April). Alagar is taken on a golden horse in a procession to the river Vaigai. Lakhs of people gather to have Darshan of the Lord early in the morning, when the golden rays of the sun add a halo to the majestic and fascinating Alagar.

On the top of the Alagar hill there is a temple dedicated to

Muruga. I am sure you remember our visit to Tiruchendur, one of the six famous Muruga temples. This is known as Pala-muthir-cholai (the garden of fruits).

We are going to the third famous Muruga temple which is situated five miles west of Madurai. There is a hill which is about 1000 ft. high The temple is at the foot of the hill. The sculptured Gopuram set against the background of the hill, is a fascinating landmark in Madurai. There is a big mantap with 48 sculptured pillars built by King Tirumalai Naicker.

We cross this mantap and climb two flights of steps. Then we reach the inner temple. It is a rock-cut temple with the deities carved on the slope of the hillock. There are three shrines facing south; they are for Muruga, Durga, and Vinayaka. There is one Vishnu shrine facing west and a Siva shrine facing east. A number of sculptural panels in the mantap lead to the shrines. The most renowned of these shrines is that of Muruga.

After conquering Surapadma at Tiruchendur, Muruga came with the devas to this place—Thiru-Param-Kunram (sacred-hill-centre). Indra the king of Devas was filled with gratitude for freeing the Devas from the tortures of Surapadma. He offered his daughter Deivayanai in marriage to Muruga. The wedding of Muruga with Deivayanai took place here and it was witnessed by Gods, Goddesses and Devas. The most important annual festival of the temple is the 'wedding' festival.

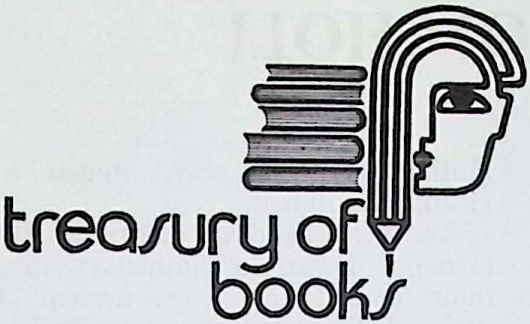
We see Muruga seated with the 'Vel' (the Lance). In this temple, all abishekams are done to the 'Vel' as it represents Muruga. Deivayanai is seated on the left and Narada is on the right. The benign smile of Muruga is something that we can never forget.

An ancient Tamil work of about 2000 years ago describes the glories of the six notable abodes of Muruga. It was written by a great poet, Nakkirar. There is an interesting story describing the circumstances leading to the composition of this Tamil work called "Thiru-Muruga-Arrupadai" (Holi-Beautiful-Path-way).

There was a Bootha (Rakshasa) named 'Karmugi'. He had vowed to collect thousand Siva worshippers whose Pujas would be disturbed by some distractions. He had been able to get 999 such devotees. He had to wait for a long period to get the thousandth devotee.

Nakkirar was a great poet and a great devotee of Siva. One day he had come to the bank of a tank for offering worship. On the bank of the tank was a peepal tree. The spot, the tank and the tree were miraculous ones. When a leaf from that tree fell on the ground, it would become a bird and fly away! If the leaf fell into the tank, it would become a fish and swim in the tank! While Nakkirar was worshipping Siva, a leaf droped from the tree and it was half in the water and half on land. Immediately the land part of the leaf became a bird and the water part

Continued on Page 21



THE DAY THE RIVER SPOKE

By Kamala Nair

National Book Trust, India.
Pages : 36; Price : Rs. 1.50

THERE are so many children in our country who cannot go to school for one reason or the other. Janu was in the same plight. She had a very intelligent little mind and would try to learn as much as possible wherever she went. From Chandu, the fisherman, she heard about the river's course to the sea. She wanted to know : "Why do yellow spiders hide in yellow flowers?" And so many things. Yet, Janu was not allowed to go to school. You see, her parents had this very wrong idea that since she was a girl, all she needed to know was how to keep the house clean, how to cook, etc. So poor little Janu had to either help in the house or work in the fields.

Janu was very upset. One day, she sat down by the river and began to cry. That was the day the river spoke to her. "Dear, dear", said a sleepy murmuring voice, "What's the matter?" So Janu poured out all her woes. And do you know what the river told her? "Try going to school first. Remember—it's up to you!" And what do you think Janu did?

I know of some children who cry when they go to school. But if you look around you, you will see so many little Janus whose parents cannot afford to send them to school. From now on, open out your books for these children. Teach them what you learn at school.

Janu stays in a little village in Kerala—and through this book, you can learn a lot about this state. Do look up your atlas and see where Kerala lies on the map of India. The book is written quite well with a lot of description. The illustrations are appealing. I do hope Kamala Nair writes more and more books.

—Shalu

ANSWERS to RIDDLES

1. It marks time.
2. When it is upset.
3. Because he is always taking notes.
4. A carpet.

By K. Geeta (13 years)

This age reads to kill time, but the wise ones read to make time alive—
Chinmaya Family — Kuwait.

THE LEGENDS OF HOLI

By Nilima Kagal and Usha Rao

DO you want to know the background of this colourful festival? According to one legend, there was a demon called Dundala who was a great devotee of Shiva and Parvati. Shiva was simple in nature. He did not realise the consequences of granting a boon to the demon which was that Dundala could eat all good children. Naughty children could not be eaten. Therefore, on Holi day, children danced fiercely and behaved in a mischievous manner.

Some people choose to believe a story that a demoness Holika had been blessed with the boon of immunity to fire. She was ordered by her brother, the Asura king, Hiranyakashyapu to burn her nephew, Prahlad because he was a sincere devotee of Lord Vishnu. One day, she took Prahlad on her lap and entered the fire. But it was Holika who perished in the process.

The Almighty had delivered his sincere devotee from destruction. The word Holi was coined from Holika. To this day, images of Holika are burnt.

Another legend states that all the farmers of various hamlets reaped their harvest before the arrival of spring. To celebrate they had a mass feast of roasted corn which were called Holas. The word Holi was coined from Hola.

Yet another version of the origin of Holi is that a demon called Tarakasura was troubling the Gods and they wanted to kill him. Only a son of Shiva could do so. But Shiva wasn't married and he did not wish to be wed. So they created Kamadeva, God of Love, who would bring Shiva and Parvati together. However Shiva was so angry at being disturbed while meditating that he opened his third eye and burnt up Kamadeva. The occasion is called Holi because Holi means burning.

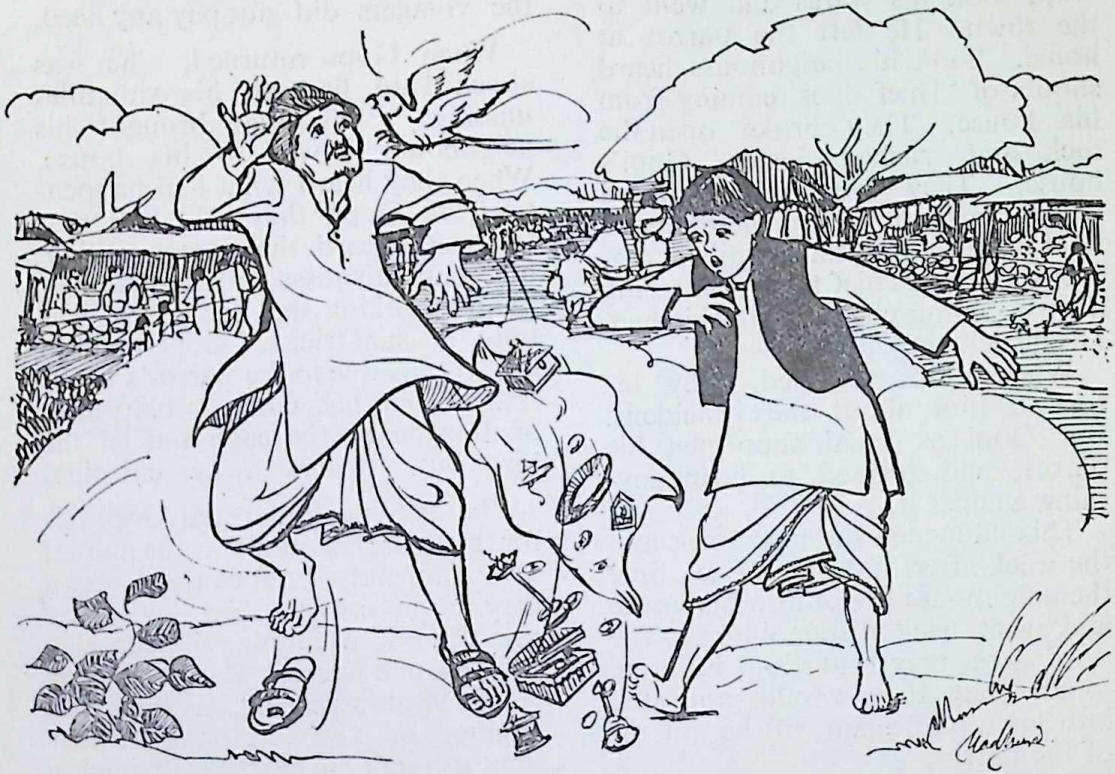
This colourful festival leaves its memory behind as it departs, strengthened by the various stories behind its celebration.

FREE GIFT SUBSCRIPTION

Do you have ten friends who would like to subscribe to Bal Vihar ? Then all you have to do is collect Rs. 15/- from each of them and send Rs. 150/- by M.O. / Cheque to "Central Chinmaya Mission Trust", Powai Park Drive, Bombay - 400 072, with the names and addresses of your friends. They will receive Bal Vihar from the month specified by you for a period of twelve months. AND YOU WILL RECEIVE A FREE GIFT SUBSCRIPTION ! If you are already a subscriber you will receive Bal Vihar for twelve months after your subscription expires.

THE FALSE ALARM

By M. P. Sugunan



GOPI was returning from the town. His way led through a forest. On passing through it, he heard a voice yelling 'Thief thief' from somewhere above him. Looking up he saw a pretty green parrot perched merrily on a tree.

"Come down, polly," said Gopi, and the parrot which was obviously tame flew down and sat on Gopi's arm. Gopi petted it and took it with him.

Back home, his neighbours made fun of Gopi when they saw the parrot. They said that it was foolish of him to keep a parrot. Another said sarcastically "you are unable to feed yourself. How are you going to feed this parrot, too?"

But Gopi kept the parrot inspite of their caustic remarks. He bought a cage and kept the parrot in that. Gopi was a potter. He used to make lovely toys and vessels of

mud. Since he could not get high prices for them at his village, he would go to the town every Sunday and sell his wares at the town market.

So the following Sunday too, Gopi took his wares and went to the town. He left the parrot at home. Soon his neighbours heard shouts of 'Thief thief' coming from his house. They broke open the lock and rushed inside Gopi's house. They were disappointed when they realized that there was no thief inside. But that Gopi's parrot was shouting 'Thief thief', on seeing a rat nibbling cheese in the kitchen. Disgusted, they left.

When Gopi returned, they informed him about the incident. But Gopi as usual supported his parrot, and refused to hear anything against it.

This happened the next week and the week after that too. Each time the neighbours broke into his house and went back disappointed. The third time, they told Gopi in harsh tones, that they would not step into his house again, till he got rid of the parrot.

But Gopi stuck to his decision. Among Gopi's neighbours was a vegetable seller named Ramu. He was a cunning man. He decided to rob Gopi's belongings when the latter next went to town. He knew that even if the parrot saw him and shouted, no one would step into his house.

It all happened just as he had imagined. The next Sunday when Gopi left for the town, he stole into his house, and made off with all the valuables. The parrot shouted 'thief' at the top of its voice, but the villagers did not pay any heed.

When Gopi returned, he was shocked to find all his valuables missing. His cries brought his neighbours over to his house. When they heard what had happened from Gopi, they told him that they had heard the parrot yelling, but had dismissed it from their minds thinking that the parrot was upto its usual tricks. Gopi realized that it was due to the parrot's tricks that no one had come to help him. So he opened the cage and let the bird out. It flew away, chirping.

The next week as usual Gopi left for the town. Today was the annual town fair and therefore there was a very large crowd. Far away, he saw Ramu, a fellow villager, also selling some wares. Ramu too saw Gopi. But strangely, as his eyes alighted on Gopi, a pang of fear went through his heart. He quickly packed his wares in a bag and stood up.

But Gopi apparently did not notice Ramu's peculiar behaviour. He went upto Ramu and asked him innocently "Hello Ramu, how come you are here today?"

"Er...er...I thought my vegetables would fetch a better price at the

We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give—
Jai Hind Oil Mills
387, Narsi Natha Street, Bombay-400 009.

annual fair," stammered Ramu, who was sweating all over. "Then where are you off to in such a hurry?" put in Gopi. But before Ramu could answer his question, a parrot flew down out of nowhere and started attacking Ramu with its sharp beak and claws. At first Gopi couldn't understand anything. Then he recognized the parrot as his pet one. Ramu who was clutching his bag of wares in one hand, let it go. It fell down and its contents spilled out. Gopi noticed with a shock that they were his own stolen valuables. He too attacked Ramu then. Soon a crowd collected to watch the spectacle of a man and a parrot attacking a single man. Seeing them, the parrot flew away. Gopi turned to the crowd and explained everything to them. They believed him, and a large number of people took Ramu to the police station and handed him over to the police.

Gopi returned home with his valuables. When he told his neighbours everything, they too praised the parrot's loyalty. Just then the parrot flew down, and settled down on Gopi's arm. It was difficult to say where it had been till then.

Gopi still goes to the market every Sunday, but he takes the parrot with him so that it may not create any mischief again.

Mother's Corner

Do you have anything to say about your mother / child? We invite mothers / children to send us interesting experiences in not more than 450 words. The best will be published in Bal Vihar.

CRICKET QUIZ

By G. Srinivas

If you were an umpire for a cricket match, what verdict would you pass in the following cases?

The answers will be published in the April issue of Bal Vihar, so look out for them!

1. A ball missed by the striker lodges in the wicket keeper's pads near his left knee. Seeing the striker out of his crease, the wicket keeper puts down the wicket with his left knee. Is the batsman out?
2. Can the wicket-keeper gather the ball in front of the wicket?
3. How many runs are awarded if a fielder stops a ball with his cap, after the batsmen have crossed for their first run, which is not yet completed?
4. What is the meaning of a two leg guard?
5. Can an umpire intervene for unfair play without appeal from either side?
6. May an appeal be made after "over" has been called?
7. Does an appeal cover all ways of being out?
8. For what infringements does the umpire at the square leg declare a batsman out?
9. Can the square leg umpire stand on the off side?
10. After the batsmen have crossed for the first run, the ball is accidentally deflected off the person of one batsman, and goes to the boundary. How many runs are allowed?

CRICKET

PAKISTAN DEMOLISHED

Hello Sportslovers!

As if to prove that it did not take a bad wicket to defeat the Pakistanis, Gavaskar's boys did it again at Madras, defeating Pakistan by ten wickets.

The skipper himself had a big role in India's win. His long, determined innings denied Pakistan a breakthrough, and consolidated India's position into a match-winning score. Kapil Dev played a hurricane innings.....narrowly missing a century. And then followed up by taking eleven wickets in the match. It is hard to believe that he made his debut only just over a year ago... ..he has clinched a permanent place in the side since then. Kapil has figured in every Indian victory by contributing with either bat or ball. Or sometimes both! He is easily one of the best all-rounders in the world today.

It was at Madras that Gavaskar stepped down from the captaincy. Viswanath led India for the first time at Calcutta. And Asif Iqbal, who announced his retirement from Test cricket, led Pakistan for the last time.

Imran Khan made the last Test memorable for his skipper by producing his fastest and best spells in this series. Asif Iqbal declared the first innings closed while Pakistan were still behind. It was the stubborn resistance of India's last-wicket pair, Ghavri and Doshi, that robbed Pakistan of valuable time on the last day. This and the fact that the Pakistanis could not reproduce their 'instant cricket' form denied Pakistan a win.

Why did Pakistan lose the series? This is the question for experts on both sides of the India-Pakistan border to think over. Pakistan was totally and badly let down by her batsmen. Never have six or seven world-class batsmen displayed such poor form so consistently. Under these circumstances, India proved to be the better side. The two men who stood out for India were both openers: Gavaskar as skipper and opening batsman; Kapil Dev as the opening bowler who repeatedly rocked the Pakistani boat until it sank under its own weight.

—Bharat Savur

My little laughing cat

I have a little cat
Who is very fat
He played with a bat
Laughing wherever he sat
That was
my fun - loving
pussy cat.

By G. S. Sunitha (9 years)

The Story of Panchatantra

A very learned and pious king known as Amarasakti was ruling his kingdom with great pomp and prosperity. There was no poverty or starvation. Everybody enjoyed life. Their happiness was expressed in art, poetry and literature. Thus culturally also, the country became very famous. But the king could not enjoy, as his mind was all the time agitated over his three sons, the heir-apparents to his throne. The sons were easy-going, lazy, unruly and irresponsible. Foreseeing the fate of his kingdom in the hands of these arrogant children, he became miserable and did not know what to do. He tried to engage great scholars to teach them princely Dharmas and Sastras and other lessons in archery and administration but to no avail. They all turned away in disappointment.

The King's ministers understood the plight of the king. They de-

cided to take up the matter themselves. They immediately sent for the great scholar Pandit Vishnusarma, who was learned and pious. The ministers discussed with Vishnusarma, who decided to make an attempt. The princes were brought before the Brahmin Pandit. Sick of the luxurious and idle life they had in the palace, the princes were waiting for a chance to go out and see places for themselves and they expressed their desire to Vishnusarma. He agreed to take them provided they were ready to adjust to the surroundings.

The next day, with the approval of the king and his minister, the Pandit took the children to his hut first. His hut was situated on a beautiful spot by the side of a village rivulet. The place was lush with green vegetation. The valleys and hills with streams running along like silver chains in serpentine elegance, the chirping birds lulling the air with their songs—all these enchanted the minds of the princes. The simple food of milk and fruits, dal and rice was more appetising and nourishing than the royal fare.

In the evenings, the Brahmin called them to his side and started telling them apparently simple stories of great morals through the characterisation of birds, animals and human beings, which they relished very much. They sat by his side attentively with an enquiring intellect. This went on for some time, and their curiosity increased. As days went by, a visible change in their character and behaviour was noticed by the Brahmin. He was very happy that they were interested in the stories. One day, the princes went to the Brahmin and informed him of their wish to go back to the palace and learn more. The Brahmin, everjoyed with happiness, took them back to their palace and their father, the king.

As soon as they saw their father, they prostrated before him. The king and the ministers were very pleased with their behaviour and presented the Brahmin with valuable things to his heart's content. The changes seen in the princes became the talk of the country and people believed that the stories narrated by the Brahmin were responsible for the changes. These stories were later known as the "Panchatantra" stories. Though the stories seem to be apparantly simple, they contain a depth of wisdom. Hence, in later years, they became very popular in all the royal nurseries, and today these stories have been translated into almost all the languages of the world.

The spirit of Advaita is not to keep away from anything, but to keep in tune with everything—

Vijay Corporation

65, Ideal Industrial Estate, Mathuradas Mills Compound
Lower Parel, Bombay-400 013.

RAMAYANA

Mission Fulfilled

By Anantha Narayanan

Mahabali, the grandson of the noble devotee, Prahlada had acquired so much power and wealth that he became a threat to the Devas due to his arrogance. On the pleadings of the Devas and with a view to really blessing Mahabali, Lord Narayana was born to Kashyapa and Aditi as an effulgent Brahmin dwarf—Vamana.

Once Mahabali was performing a Yagna when he lavishly distributed gifts-all that the people asked. As the young Vamana approached the Yagnasala, the surprised guru of Mahabali, Sukracharya, saw through

the Divine disguise and recognized the Lord in Vamana. He whispered to Mahabali about the identity of the dwarf and asked him not to promise anything to the youth as he was Lord Narayana!

Mahabali, being a devotee of the Lord, felt all the more happy that he would have the privilege of offering gifts even to the Lord, and refused to abide by the advice of his guru. He requested the boy to seek whatever wealth he desired!

The austere looking Vamana replied that he only wanted three paces of earth, measured by his feet! Mahabali was surprised. Smiling, with the arrogant feeling that the boy did not even know to beg properly, he readily agreed to Vamana's request.

Immediately, Vamana grew miraculously in size to fill up the entire Universe with His mighty form, called Trivikrama! King Mahabali was aghast and looked like a puny dwarf before Lord Trivikrama!

With one vast step, Trivikrama measured the earth and covered the entire heavens withthe other! When Mahabali was asked for space for the third step, he realised the folly of his arrogance and, in all humility, bent down and showed his head. The Lord's third measure was placed on Mahabali's devoted head. This demonstrated to the world that a humble devotee's head was immeasurable in the Lord's vision and could be as vast as the Universe! With the touch of Divinity, Mahabali was thus blessed by Narayana to become immortal. Many a time, the Lord's punishment becomes a lasting cure for man's ills, if only we know to accept it as the great Mahabali did!

Thus concluding the story of Vamana, Sage Viswamitra said that Siddashrama was that holy place where he lived and wished to perform the yagna. Viswamitra continued, "As the Rakshasas are harassing the Rishis and polluting the Yagnasala, Rama, you have been brought here to protect the yagna and destroy the Rakshasas so that the Yagna may be successfully concluded."

Sri Rama replied that he was ever ready to obey the command of his Revered Guru.

All the Rishis of the Ashram were overjoyed to see and hear the charming princes and affectionately treated them with fruits etc. according to the traditions of the Ashram.

Viswamitra started the preparations for the Yagna in right earnest, observing the appropriate vows. The other Rishis told Sri Rama and Lakshmana that they should be ever alert for six days and nights and be in readiness to meet the Rakshasas.

Accordingly, the two eager, disciplined and fully armed princes guarded the Yagnasala, like the two-eye-lids guarding the eyes, for six days and nights . Next morning, Sri Rama warned Lakshmana to be more vigilant stating that the demomons may come at any moment.

When the Yagna was about to reach its finale with the last offerings and as the brilliant flame from the Yagna-Kund rose up, the sky darkened and a frightening cry shattered the peaceful atmosphere.

Sri Rama spotted the terrible Mareecha and Subahu along with the Rakshasa army. When they were about to defile the Yagna with unclean things like blood, flesh etc., Sri Rama acted like lightning and released the Manavastra at Mareecha, which made him motionless and threw him near the sea, hundreds of miles away. As Mareecha was to be used as a bait later on to destroy the other Rakshasas, he was not killed by Sri Rama. The other Rakshasa Subahu was, however, killed by Sri Rama with the powerful Agneyastra—the terrible fire-missile. Thereafter, the two valiant princes killed all the remaining Rakshasas to the astonishment of the Rishis !

The sky was cleared and the Yagna was a great success.

Sage Viswamitra, with supreme joy at the conclusion of the Yagna, first expressed his gratitude to King Dasaratha and affectionately blessed the boys thus: "Oh Great Princes! You are not only very obedient sons of your parents but have also shown that you are devoted and very worthy disciples of your Guru, in successfully discharging the difficult task of protecting the Yagna with rare courage and determination! By your noble act, the Ashrama has regained its name "Siddashrama." As the word 'Sidda' means victory, the Ashrama had once again become as during the Vamanavatara, the symbol of success by the acts of another glorious Avatara.

This episode, starting with the march of the princes with Sage Viswamitra till the protection of the Yagna, demonstrates the teacher-pupil (गुरुशिष्य) relationship of ancient days. The Guru lovingly taught the disciples and the students served the Guru and learnt with utter reverence. Naturally, when successful results come out of such relationship, as we saw in the protection of the yagna, the Guru feels supremely happy and satisfied —much more than the parents!

To be Continued

Alagarkoil and Murugan koil

Continued from Page 10

of the leaf became a fish and each tried to pull the other to its side. What a strange phenomenon! This wondrous sight attracted Nakkirar. Lo and behold ! There arrived Karmugi and carried off Nakkirar to the place where he had kept the 999 victims. Pleased with the fulfilment of his vow, Karmugi went for a bath before starting on his grand feast.

When Nakkirar came to know the tragic situation in which he had been the instrument for the final fate of the Siva devotees, he poured out his heart, singing the glories of Muruga of the six famous abodes and prayed for succour. When Karmugi arrived, Muruga killed him with his 'Vel'. This event is supposed to have taken place in Thiru-Parrankunram.

The hill is famous for a Siva shrine also. There is a tomb of a Muslim Saint, 'Sikander Pasha'. There are a number of Jain images in the hill. So Hindus, Jains and Muslims consider the hill sacred and offer worship in their own way.

TALES FROM ODYSSEY

News of Odysseus

By P. Varadarajan

WHEN the feast was over, Nestor addressed Telemachus and Athene. "Strangers, now that you have had enough of food, can you tell me who you are? Where do you come from? What is your purpose or else are you sea-robbers?"

At these words of Nestor*, Telemachus answered him, "Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory of the Greeks§ We have come from far-off Ithaca. We have come in search of news concerning my father. I am the son of noble Odysseus. I am told that both you and he fought together and sacked the city of the Trojans. While we hear news about the other warriors who fought at Troy, we do not hear anything about my father. We do not even know wheher the is dead or alive. I have come over

here to know whether you have any first hand or at least second hand information about my father. Kindly don't try to hide anything from me by your soothing words. Tell me plainly what happened."

"My child, your words have kindled my past sorrows. All my woes at Troy loom large before my eyes now. We, the Greeks, sailed in great fury to Troy. There , many of our valiant warriors such as Alas, Achilles, Patroclus etc. fell. One of my own brave sons, Antilochus, fell there. It will be years before I finish narrating the sorrowful story of the battle at Troy.

"I do remember your father. There was none to equal him in wisdom and craft then. Look, while we were at Troy your father and I seldom disagreed in thoughts and words.

"Amidst the Greeks, Agamemnon and Menelaus were two important leaders. Soon after we sacked Troy , there arose a difference of opinion between these two. While Menelaus wanted to leave Troy immediately, Agamemnon insisted upon leaving Troy after making sacrifices to the Gods. A whole night was thus spent in debating. But the next morning, I, your father and some others started to set sail towards our mother country. The others remained with Agamemnon. But when we had reached Tenedos,§§ some among us felt sympathy for Agamemnon. Your father too was one among them. He along with his like-minded friends , went back to join Agamemnon again. I sailed on towards Pylos. After many difficulties, I reached Pylos. Apart from these things, I know nothing more about your father, my child. By the by, I am told that a host of wooers claiming your mother's hand are ravaging your house. Who knows? One fine day Odysseus may come back and take revenge upon them. All these things can be achieved if only Athene supports you and your father."

ON hearing these words of Nestor, Telemachus sorrowfully retorted, "All these words are but a palliative to ward off an evil day. I don't have any hope that my father hereafter—wards may come back home".

"My boy, don't be discouraged. I would like to advise you to contact Menelaus. He is now in Lacedaemon in Sparta. As he has recently returned from a strange country, I think that he may know something more about your father. Anyhow after seeing Menelaus, hasten to your home. It is not good for you to leave your house and property in the hands of the wooers and wander for a long time out".

While they were so talking, the sun went down in the west. Then Athene told Nestor that they should finish offering sacrifice to the God and proceed to bed for sleeping. As per the words of Athene, they made a final sacrifice to the immortal Gods. After this both Athene and Telemachus wanted to return to their ship. At this, Nestor insisted that they should stay with him.

CONTEMPLATION FOR MOTHERS

By Lalita Frazier

ON ATTENTION

"May I think of Thee with that strong love which the ignorant cherish for the things of the world and may that Love never cease to abide in my heart."

(*Prapanna Gita*, 42)

CONSIDER for a moment all that is around you that has been man-made. The building in which you live, the clothes you wear, the magazine page you now hold—all these first were ony a thought in someone's mind—this thought was shared and together men put forth effort to manifest the same thought as an object in the material world. Just for a while, don't take for granted all the man-made substance around you, but consider how it was created, how time and energy necessarily was needed for it to be produced—how there was a plan for its creation, how consistent effort was needed for it to come into shape. You can then appreciate that no matter how good and beautiful your ideas are, unless you apply your time and energy to make them manifest, a thought is just an invisible impulse that passes as nothing, comes and goes with no perceptible effect. In other words, whatever you want to produce you must put time and energy into—otherwise called attention. Whatever you give your attention to—that is what you will make manifest, will create more of in your life.

As a mother you did not create the child as it was born to you, just as the gardener did not make the seed nor the seedling he plants and tends . But just as the gardener must water and weed and prune the plant in order for it to reach its potential as a mature, flowering plant, so too the mother "creates" the child with her attention. How this growth-producing attention works is not easy to describe.

To be Continued

You will be happy to know that this is the first in a series of articles for mothers. Lalita Frazier, the writer , is a mother of two children; a daughter aged 13, and a son, aged 11. She will be sharing her thoughts and experiences in child-raising.

Think !

As on a grinding stone, people get themselves crushed in the endless competition of the modern material world and its market place.

—Swami Chinmayananda.

In the mad rush for things in this commercial world, many people are shattered and disappointed because there are very few things and many people who want them. People thus cause their own destruction by hankering after worldly objects. This is the thought for the month.

Based on it, we want you write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Balvihar. The upper age limit for this Contest is 15 years. The last date for sending entries is May 15th, so send your entry soon.

The Winner!

The Winner of the thought for the month of January is Meera Viswanathan of Durgapur (14 years). Congratulations Meera for winning the prize twice! We are sending you "Bal Ramayana" as a prize.

To live constantly our convictions is the noblest way of life but it demands courage and to grow into it is an art—

—Swami Chinmayananda.

SIR Thomas Moore was a talented and versatile writer of the sixteenth century. He was a lawyer, a judge and eventually was made Chancellor of England. He was asked by Henry VIII, a close friend of his, to sign a document against his conscience. Sir Thomas Moore refused and for this he was cast into prison.

While he was in prison awaiting execution, his lawyer friends pleaded with him to bow to the wishes of the king, arguing that many eminent men had signed the document. Sir Thomas Moore replied that it was a matter of their conscience. As for him, he could not do it. He said "In things touching the conscience, every true and great subject is more bound to his conscience and to his soul than to any other man in all the world beside!" On being told that if he signed it, he would yet have the favour of the king, Sir Thomas Moore replied,

"I am the king's good servant, but God's first. I never intend to pin my soul to another man's back, not even the best man I know living today, for I know not whither he may carry it."

His position was made even more difficult when his wife and favourite daughter came to persuade him to sign the document and at the same time tearfully reminded him of his love for them, his lovely home, his family and friends.

Deeply moved, he replied, "My beloved daughter, nothing has moved me more than to see your labour to persuade me". He said to his wife, "Alice,how long do you think I am going to enjoy my life at Chelsea?" "A full twenty years", she replied, "you are not yet old". "My good wife", he gently replied, "you are not very skilful at bargaining. Would you have me for twenty years to give up eternity?"

Sir Thomas Moore would regard himself a very poor lawyer indeed to exchange the friendship of the king of kings for the doubtful favour of his earthly sovereign. To live upto his convictions he was made to pay the highest price, his life. Yet he was not discouraged, when he knew the value of his right beliefs.

"The truly great" says Dr. Radhakrishnan, "are not men of wealth or possession, not men who gain name or fame but those who testify the truth in them and refuse to compromise whatever be the cost. They are determined to do what is right. Though we may refuse them comforts, we cannot buy their souls. Whoever possesses this invulnerability of spirit even to a little extent, deserves our admiration".

By Meera Viswanathan

WONDER WITH NUMBERS !

If you see the following numbers carefully, you will find a certain symmetry about them, almost like a staircase going up and then down! Can you guess what the answers to 7, 8 and 9 will be?

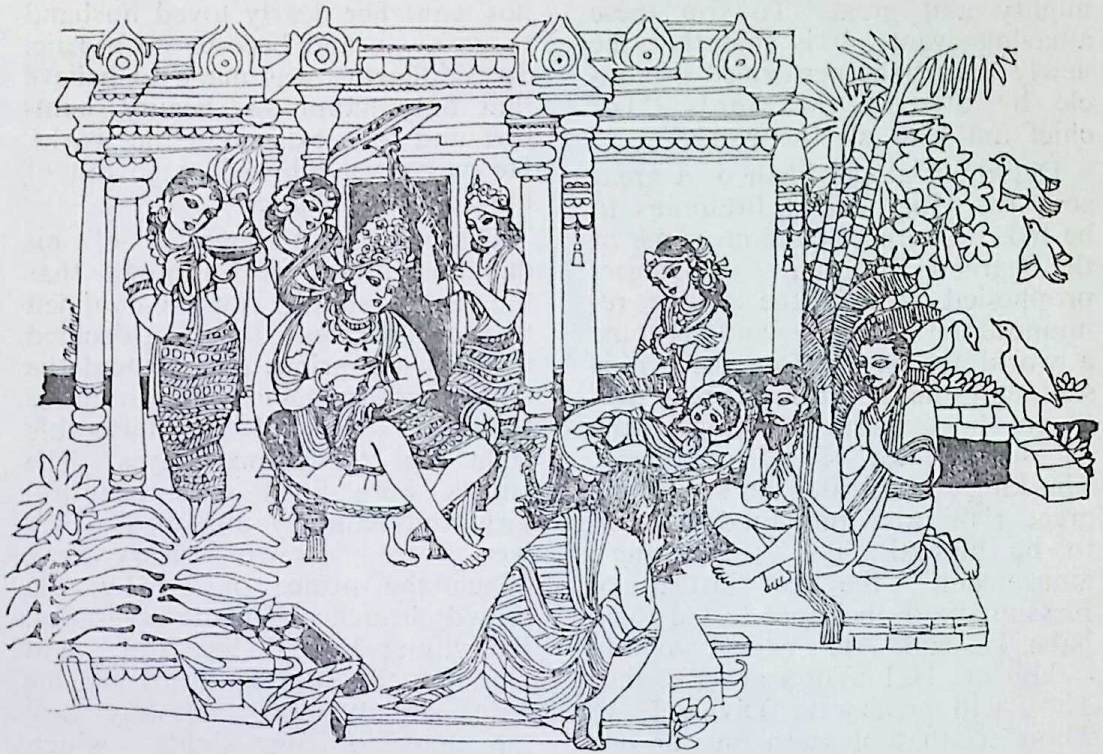
1.	1 x 1	— 1
2.	1 1 x 1 1	— 1 2 1
3.	1 1 1 x 1 1 1	— 1 2 3 2 1
4.	1 1 1 1 x 1 1 1 1	— 1 2 3 4 3 2 1
5.	1 1 1 1 1 x 1 1 1 1 1	— 1 2 3 4 5 4 3 2 1
6.	1 1 1 1 1 1 x 1 1 1 1 1 1	— 1 2 3 4 5 6 5 4 3 2 1
7.	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 x 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	—
8.	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 x 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	—
9.	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 x 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	—

By K. V. Shivdas.

Answers on Page 22

BUDDHA POORNIMA

By Brni. Usha



IN the cool shade of a Palsa tree in bloom in the Royal gardens of Lumbini, on the full moon day of Veshakha was born Prince Siddhartha to King Suddodhana and Queen Mayavati of Kapilvastu. This was nearly 2500 years ago, in the year 556 B. C. Many princes have been born since then, but the birth of this prince made history for Prince Siddhartha was none other than he who was later to be known as "the Buddha" (the Enlightened One) or The Lord of Compassion. The birthday of this great one is known today as the "Buddha Poornima". Not only does this day mark the physical birth of Buddha, but it was on this day that he attained enlightenment—35 years after his birth.

Remarkable incidents heralded the birth of this saviour. It is said that on the day the future Buddha was to be born, an immeasurable light spread throughout the ten thousand worlds; the blind saw, the deaf heard, the dumb spoke,

the lame walked, the diseased became well, the wild animals turned timid and many more such wonders took place. The Royal couple had also dreamt that the son that was to be born to them was going to be mighty and great. To top these amazing events, it is said that the newly born babe performed a miracle by uttering the words "The chief am I in all the world".

Delighted at the birth of a great son, the king invited Brahmins to be fed. On this occasion, some of the learned Brahmin astrologers prophesied that if the prince renounced the world, he would become a world teacher. Moreover, it is said that the Rishi Kaladeva who heard the celestial rejoicings came to the palace of Suddodhana. The king was thrilled on seeing the great rishi and presented his son to be blessed. To the king's amazement, the seer instead of blessing, paid obeisance to the royal babe. He said—"Oh babe I worship —thou art He! Thou art Buddha; Thou will preach the Divine Law; Thou art that blossom on our human tree which opens but once in many many years, to fill the world fraught with ignorance with wisdom and joy".

However, the prince was rendered motherless, seven days after his birth. The king saw to it that inspite of this great loss, the prince was brought up in the most happy set-up with all possible comforts which no one could dream of. The luxury of the palace was celestial. The prince at the age of sixteen was married to Princess Yashodara. Siddhartha's father took care to see that there was no occasion for the son to learn about miseries lest it would make the prince renounce the world, as was prophesied by the learned astrologers. The young wife also did not want her dearly loved husband to go away and become an ascetic. So Siddhartha was made to believe that only happiness, beauty, comfort and love existed in the world. He was never allowed to go out of the beautiful palace.

One day, at the request of his daughter-in-law who thought that the prince should not be confined to such an extent, the king decided to allow the prince to go round the city. Arrangements were so made that no sorrowful or miserable sight met the prince's eyes. The streets were lined with beautiful girls and happy young men. Flowers were strewn everywhere. When the prince passed by, the crowd cheered and made obeisance. Everything looked beautiful and nice, but the Supreme Lord had his plans already made. Destiny took the shape of four sights which changed the life of the prince and made him realize the role he had to play in this life. The first sight was that of an old man, the second of a diseased man, the third of a dead man and the fourth, the serene face of a Bhikshu. He asked of his charioteer— "Channa, what are these and why do they look different from others?" Channa, the charioteer told him that these were the different stages which every human being had to go through. The prince began to think and asked again "Will my beautiful wife

and my father also become like this?" "Yes, O Master" said Channa. The prince was astonished and pained "Oh Channa", he said "Turn back the chariot! Take me home. I wish to see no more". The prince was no more cheerful. Thoughtfulness befell him. Even the news of the birth of a son, Rahula could not cheer him, for the Prince thought that anyone born into this world was an heir to wretchedness.

So in his twenty-ninth year, the prince left his palace and the city and resolved not to rest till he became "the Buddha" or the enlightened one. For six years, he wandered around as an ascetic eating the food which he got by begging. He practised severe penances till his body could take no more. He then stopped following the 'extreme path', which caused him to suffer physically and followed the moderate path or the middle path.

By following this path, Prince Siddhartha reached the state of 'Buddhahood' which he was seeking. This great event happened on the full moon day of Veshakha in his thirty-fifth year, under the spreading shade of a majestic Bodhi tree on the banks of river Neranjara in Buddha Gaya. Today Buddha Gaya is an important place of pilgrimage. For seven weeks, the blessed one consciously enjoyed the bliss of Buddhahood i.e. 'Supreme Enlightenment'. Then Buddha gave his first sermon—his message of love and wisdom at Sarnath in Benares. Great Brahmins became his disciples and, wearing the yellow robe, they went from place to place, from town to town preaching this Gospel of Love. Thousands of people became Bhikshus.

Buddha was often asked if there was a God, and he answered he did not know. When asked about right conduct he would reply "Do good and Be good". Once there came five Brahmins who asked him to settle their dispute. One said, "Sir, my book says that God is such and such, and that is the way to reach God". The others said the same thing.

Buddha calmly listened and asked them one by one "Does any one of your books say that God becomes angry, that He injures anyone, that He is impure? No Sir, they all teach that God is pure and good. Then my friends, why not become pure and good, that you may know what God is?" said Buddha.

Buddha also preached for the good of animals. It is said that once a king was sacrificing a young lamb so that he may reach heaven. The cry of the dumb little thing rent the air. So Buddha came forward and said to the king, "If the sacrifice of a lamb helps you to go to heaven, sacrificing a man will help you better, so sacrifice me". The king was ashamed and became Buddha's disciple.

Thus Buddha tirelessly spread his message of love. He ruled the world by his teaching based on morality and righteousness. The four noble Truths and the eight fold path of Lord Buddha became a universal religion, which though as old as the mountains, is still ever-

Continued on Page 12

PROBLEMS?

DO you have a problem? If you do, please write and tell us. We shall try and solve it. Remember two heads are better than one, so don't worry. Write a letter and pass your worries on to us.

You need not be afraid about your name being published. If you don't want your name to appear in Bal Vihar, please write and tell us and we shall not disclose it.

Don't forget to mention your age and the class which you are in. This will help Kamath Uncle to give the correct solution to your problem.

Dear Kamath Uncle,

I am studying in Std. VIII. I get second or third rank usually. So I always try for the first place. But then I myself feel that I am not putting in much effort in my studies. When I take my text books and note books out to study, I just feel bored after studying a little and I waste my time, doing something else. Then, at the last moment, I feel panicky and start studying. So you see, I can only go up to second rank at this rate. I am sure that if I study in good time before my unit tests begin, I can easily stand first in my class because studying hard at the last moment itself has brought me upto the second rank. Of course, I must confess there is a lot of competition in my class, but how do I create interest in studies?

Yours faithfully,
R

Dear R,

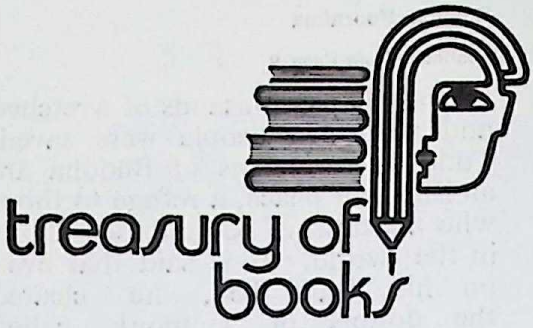
My congratulations to you for standing second or third in your class, inspite of competition!

It is quite likely that you find your text book dull or feel that it gives limited knowledge. Therefore you feel bored with it. I suggest you read other books and magazines on your school subjects. Go to the library and read these books. At first, even this you will find dull. But the more you read, the more you will get interested. MAKE IT A HABIT TO READ DAILY—SCHOOL AND GENERAL BOOKS. Nothing worthwhile was ever achieved without effort.

The first ranker has scored over you in some subjects. Find out which ones. Now build up your knowledge in these subjects. Is it Hindi? Then why not read some Hindi magazines or books. Mathematics? Solve problems day and night. You can also play games in which you need to pay attention (eg. Scrabble).

If you drop your textbook because you find it difficult, I suggest you approach your parents or teachers for help. Please do get into the habit of studying daily. You will come first always.

Yours affectionately,
Kamath Uncle.



GOPI
by Del Manuel
Orient Longman Limited
Pages: 22—35; Price: Rs. 3.75 each.

THE author has written several books on Gopi, the toy lion. Gopi is a gentle, good-hearted lion who lives in a little mud hut. His friends are the naughty, noisy little monkey, Hukoo-Hukoo and Yumfy, the strange-looking toy, who does not know who he is. Yumfy has 'brass-stud eyes' and his feet are 'red pieces of leather'. They all live in a town called Khilonepur, which is situated in the Land of Here-and-There-and—Everywhere.

All the books are very well written. The English is very simple and very, very readable. The books are meant for younger children of about say, seven to ten years of age.

The three little friends always do something which ends up in a fiasco. The first book which I will review for you is called "GOPI AND THE MAGIC CHAPPALS". Gopi receives by post, a pair of these magic chappals. Unfortunately, he cannot wear them as he has four paws. So Hukoo-Hukoo sports them around and finds out that whatever he wishes for, comes true! He tells Yumfy, "I wish you'd stand on your head" (which I think was very rude of him). And hey presto, there you see Yumfy standing on his head! The story goes on about how the naughty monkey uses up all the wishes. You will roar with laughter at all his pranks!

GOPI AND THE FIGHTING BULL features a newcomer in the toy-town of Khilonepur. All the toys shun the poor fighting bull because his very name makes them think he will fight with all of them. They close their shops and everyone stays at home. So what can the poor bull do? He is hungry and thirsty and very lonely. And Chuckles, the singing stream tells him :

"Fighting Bull, don't be sad
All Khilonepur isn't bad.
The toys are kind, but they're afraid
That's why they won't come to your aid".

In the end, the toys find out how kind-hearted the bull actually is. Which shows how deceptive names can be.

GOPI AND THE BIRTHDAY PARTY is another very interesting story. Gopi and Hukoo-Hukoo give Yumfy a birthday party. And goodness me, you should see the goodies they make—samosas, cucumber sandwiches, jilebis, rosagollas and a birthday cake! And how do you think they know it is Yumfy's birthday? On his shoes, a little label reads 10/5 (the tenth of May). But Gopi and Hukoo-Hukoo are in for a

surprise! How they laugh and laugh!

GOPI AND THE RAINBOW CIRCUS tells you how all the three friends join the circus and their (mis) adventures! Gopi is made to jump through a burning hoop and his tail catches fire. Kiki, the squirrel joins the trapeze artistes. Yumfy feeds the animals. And Hukoo-Hukoo gets the biggest surprise! You see, he is the Live Cannon Ball! Poor Hukoo-Hukoo.

GOPI AND THE YUM YUM SHOP is as yum yum as it sounds. Hukoo-Hukoo and his friends decide to open up an eating place. They make the furniture with their own hands. They make "steaming hot singaras and mouth-watering jilebis in sweet, sticky syrup, feather-light puris and delicious tikhari". But what do you think happens? Kind - hearted Yumfy feeds an entire family of hungry rabbits without charging them a paisa. So they have to close down their shop. But Hukoo-Hukoo is undaunted. What do you think he says? "Gopi ! Yumfy! I've got another wonderful idea!"

By Shalu

Buddha Poornima

Continued from Page 9

green. Thus thousands of wretched and miserable people were saved. Today the teachings of Buddha are an island of peace, a refuge to those who are tired of being tossed about in the world. It is said that even on his death bed, he cleared the doubts of a monk called Subaddha.

After having thus spent his life preaching for the good of the world, He reached a Sala grove at Kusinara. He bid his chief disciple, Ananda, to lay a couch with its head to the north between the twin Sala trees and as this was done, the Sala trees shed their blossoms on the body of the blessed one for it was evident that the Buddha was departing. The people of Kusinara came to know that the end of Buddha was nearing. They all left their homes to be with him. His last words were to his disciples. He said "Death is now our inheritance—therefore work out your own salvation with diligence." He died in the year 486 B.C.

Let us all look forward to Buddha Poornima each year so that we may hear more about this great one.

FREE GIFT SUBSCRIPTION

Do you have ten friends who would like to subscribe to Bal Vihar ? Then all you have to do is collect Rs. 15/- from each of them and send Rs. 150/-by M. O. / Cheque to "Central Chinmaya Mission Trust", Powai Park Drive, Bombay -400 072, with the names and addresses of your friends. They will receive Bal Vihar from the month specified by you for a period of twelve months. AND YOU WILL RECEIVE A FREE GIFT SUBSCRIPTION ! If you are already a subscriber you will receive Bal Vihar for twelve months after your subscription expires.

SAI BABA OF SHIRDI

THE STORY OF HIS LIFE

By Mrinalini V. Sarabhai

Sai Baba

Mrs. Mrinalini Sarabhai, the wife of the famous scientist (late) Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, is an internationally noted dancer. The first woman to bag the coveted "Veera Shrinkala", she was also awarded the title of 'Natya Kala Sikhamani' in Madras and the Gujarat State Award for Dance in 1969. In 1970 she was given the Sangeet Natak Academy Award for Creative and Experimental Dance. Today, she has her own institute of dancing in Ahmedabad known as the Darpana Academy of Performing Arts. Besides dance, she is also interested in writing. She has written several books for children such as Nala and Damayanti, Krishna, Ramayana and Kiratarjuniyam published by Tata Mc Graw-Hill.

THE tree was a benevolent and kind protector of Indian travellers. Students studied under trees in ashram schools, weary pilgrims rested under the green shade, and mighty kings stopped a while to rest in leafy groves.

It was through love of nature that in ancient India, trees became symbols of friendship and extended their arms to human beings. Shakuntala, going to her husband's home received gifts of jewels and bridal clothes from the trees she had so carefully nurtured from her childhood. Trees scattered flowers like teardrops when Sita was alone thinking and longing for her beloved Rama. All Indian painting and sculpture extols trees and most beautiful is the carved stone frieze seen at Bharhut.

Above all, trees belong to the Gods. Shiva himself is Saparna, abundant with flowers and foliage; and trees like the bilva are used in his worship.

It is not surprising that each deity has his own particular tree.

Shiva, the great teacher Dakshinamurti, is seated under a banyan. Vishnu as Narayana has the badari tree with widespread branches sheltering him. Every Jain tirthankara has his special tree.

It was under the Bodhi tree that Gautama Buddha found enlighten-

ment. Forest glades were conducive to study, meditation and philosophy. And so it was that a great saint sat under a neem tree in the year 1872.

He was a young man of sixteen years of age. There was deep mystery surrounding him for no one knew where he came from, who he was, and what religion he followed. He made his home under the sparse tree and ate whatever the people of the town gave him.

He first went to a Hindu temple but the priest forbade him to enter, seeing his garb was that of a fakir. Today that boy is worshipped far and wide, his name on the lips of a million people, his image enshrined in a thousand hearts.

This was Sai Baba of Shirdi. He spoke little to the people around him, lived in great poverty, and was dressed shabbily yet one of them remarked "Watch that young fakir; he is a jewel on a heap of dung".

Finally, he settled down in a small mud mosque and there he stayed for the rest of his life. Soon things of a very strange nature began to happen in this little town of Shirdi.

In the mosque, a fire was kept burning day and night. For that the young man used to beg for oil from the merchants in the shops. But some people are cruel, so one day they refused to give him any oil at all. The fakir said nothing, but just went to his mosque. Some of the people followed him to see what he could do when the fire went out. And what they saw they never forgot.

Sai Baba just picked up a pot of water and filled the lamps with it. The lamps burnt brightly as though filled with oil. Everyone was thunder struck! The people who came to mock, went back ashamed of their behaviour.

From that moment, the people of Shirdi knew that they truly had an extraordinary being in their midst.

In the beginning, Sai Baba never gave his name. He was just 'Sai' and 'Baba' which meant 'saint' and 'father'. That was what he was called by all the village folk.

He had strange ways about him. When people asked him "Baba, what is your name?" he used to reply,

"They call me Sai Baba".
"Baba, your father's name?"
"He was also Sai Baba".
"And your guru?"
"Venkusha".
"And your religion?"
"Kabir".
"And what caste?"
"Parvardigar" (God)
"And Baba, how old are you?"
"Many lakhs of years".

In all these answers, there was deep meaning; that he gave no name to himself or his father meant that he was above all names. His religion Kabir was after the great poet, who was both Muslim and Hindu. 'Parvardigar' means the Divine. The reply about his age shows that birth and death are mere thoughts of ordinary mortal men and age meant nothing.

These answers showed that Sai Baba was an Incarnation of God himself. Though he was dressed like a Muslim, he often gave talks on Hindu philosophy and quoted

Sanskrit verses. He hardly ever read a book or wrote one. And he often said "People hope to find Brahma in books but it is Bhrama (confusion) and not Brahma (God) that they find".

He had a wonderful childlike quality, that endeared him to all kinds of people. Often, scholars and pandits came to mock him and then became his greatest disciples. Even the custodian of the Hindu temple who had turned him away when he arrived at Shirdi became one of his most devoted disciples.

When he performed miracles, he did them with a careless abandon. Once, some people wanted to get back from Shirdi to the Kopergaon station, about six miles away. At that time, the horse carriage was the only conveyance. There was a terrible storm and the thunder and lightning terrified the horse. Sai Baba looked up into the sky and in a loud voice cried out, "Stop all this now, my children have to get back," and in a moment, the sky was clear and peaceful.

He also had a strange way of sleeping. A plank of wood about five feet by one and a half feet, was suspended from the roof, tied by strips of old cloth. It was about six feet above the ground and there was no visible way that Baba could get onto it.

Yet, he slept there, every night, and once when some curious people tried to probe into the secret, he broke the plank to pieces. His anger, his odd manner of speaking, were all filled with meaning for each disciple. So was his great compassion and tenderness for all living beings. One day, a well known disciple asked him to come for lunch. She prepared a delicious lunch for the saint and waited anxiously for him. She was horrified when she turned around to see a dog, feasting on the food! She drove it away with a stick. Time passed but Baba did not appear. Fearing he was ill, she ran to the temple. There was Baba rubbing his arm. "What is the matter"? she asked. "Are you not well?" "How can I be well" he grumbled, "when you hit me with a stick?" Amazed and chastened, the woman returned to her house.

To be Continued

Come One! Come All!

To the Children's Fair at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Powai. It's on Sunday, June 1, 1980. H. H. Swami Chinmayananda will be present. So keep yourselves free on that day. Parents are also invited. More details in the next issue.

RIDDLES

1. What gets bigger when it is turned upside down?
2. What kind of fish can't swim?
3. What is protected from rain and still gets wet?
4. What is the difference between the Prince of Wales and football?

Answers on Page 22.

GOLDEN JUBILEE : BOTHAM'S TEST

Hello Sportslovers!

It was a page out of history, when legends of the past lined up at the Wankhede stadium. Lala Amarnath, Mustaq Ali, Vijay Hazare... the list is as long as it is impressive. Each one as much a legend in his own time as Gavaskar is to ours. It was a touching moment, when Gavaskar went around collecting autographs of ex-players (some of whom had played their last tests even before Sunny was born).

The Golden Jubilee Test was fittingly against England(the first Test played by India having been against England half-a-century ago).

The elements conspired to make the English feel at home by literally creating English atmosphere. Where the ball swung, seamed and retained its shine through the first day and Indian batsmen fumbled, felt and finally fell to the moving

Ian Botham
Photo : Courtesy 'Sportsweek'.

ball, Ian Botham used the conditions to perfection with Bob Taylor giving him excellent support behind the wickets. Together, this duo snared India to its doom, and in the process combined to set up two records for themselves : ten catches to Bob Taylor; thirteen wickets and a century to Ian Botham.

Added to their record-breaking feats, Botham and Taylor also teamed up, when England were 68 for five, to take England within 13 runs of India's first innings score of 242. Botham and Taylor not only saved the match for England ; they won it for their country.

India again collapsed before the sustained swing of Botham, falling for a miserable 149 and setting England 96 runs to win the Jubilee Test.

England walked home by ten wickets to return with the victory that had eluded them right through Australia. (England lost all the three Tests to Australia).

—Bharat Savur.

RAMAYANA

Mission Fulfilled

By Anantha Narayanan

Sage Viswamitra felt that his main role was not yet over, namely, that of rewarding Sri Rama for his valour with a suitable, beautiful life-partner—Sita Devi. In this connection it may be recalled that Sage Viswamitra suddenly arrived at King Dasaratha's palace when the King was planning the marriage of the Princes! The opportune time had arrived . Sage Viswamitra was thus overjoyed at the very thought of this proposed happy union of two noble hearts—Sri Rama and Sita Devi!

At that time, Sage Viswamitra had received an invitation for a great and unique Dhanur-Yagna, from King Janaka, the wise and saintly king of Videha Kingdom. Sage Viswamitra joyfully decided that the two princes should also accompany them so that Sri Rama would have the opportunity of seeing the great Shiva's bow, that was being worshipped in the King's Palace.

Thus the party consisting of Sage Viswamitra, the two charming and enthusiastic princes, Sri Rama and Lakshamana, and the other Rishis of the Ashram left for Mithila, the capital of Videha.

On to Mithila

Sage Viswamitra with the other Rishis of Siddashrama and the two valiant princes, Sri Rama and Lakshmana, after travelling throughout the day, reached the banks of the river Sone in the evening. They camped there for the night.

Throughout the journey and whenever they came across important and holy places like Ashramas or rivers, the sage affectionately educated the curious princes about the history of the places like a tourist guide! Thus, in ancient times, education was not merely confined to Gurukulas (class rooms) and palm-leaves (text books) but it was a continuous training process in life to keep the eyes and ears alert!

Crossing the Sone in the morning, Sage Viswamitra and party reached the banks of the holy river Ganga to spend the night there. After bath in the holy river and their usual worship, they had food in a ready-made hut. Then all of them sat very relaxed with Viswamitra in the centre.

Bhageeratha

As Sri Rama desired to know the origin of Ganga, Viswamitra narrated the story of the descent of Ganga. King Sagara was a

It takes courage to be true—
Jai Hind Oil Mills
387, Narsi Natha Street, Bombay-400 009.

former King of Ayodhya who was blessed with many valiant sons. When he undertook to perform the Aswamedha Yagna and the horse that was ceremoniously sent out was lost, the King instructed his sons to search for it. They searched the entire earth and when they dug deep and reached the nether world —Patala, they found the missing horse there!

Sage Kapila, who was none other than Vishnu, was also doing tapas there. Mistaking the sage to be the thief, they accused and insulted him. When Sage Kapila was thus disturbed, the fire of his tapas burnt down the princes to ashes!

As the princes did not return, King Sagara's grandson, Amsuman, went in search of them and the horse. He found the horse in Patala but could not locate his uncles and saw only mounds of ashes. With the help of Garuda, the king of birds and the vehicle of Vishnu, he came to know that the ashes belonged to his uncles. He was also advised that the only way by which his ancestors could attain lasting peace was by purification with the waters of the Ganga. Ganga was in the Devaloka and the ashes to be washed down by the holy waters were in Patala. Hence Ganga had to be brought down—a very difficult task indeed! King Amsuman and the succeeding King Dilipa could not achieve the purpose. The valiant King Bhageeratha, the successor, was however, determined to achieve the salvation of his ancestors at all costs. After doing very severe tapas, when Lord Brahma appeared, he requested Lord Brahma, who was pleased with his efforts, to order Ganga to kindly step down. Since the earth would not stand the mighty force of Ganga's fall, Brahma advised Bhageeratha to seek the grace of Lord Shiva who alone had the power to withstand and receive the force of Ganga.

Accordingly, Bhageeratha performed severe tapas once again to invoke Lord Shiva's grace. Being pleased, the Lord agreed to receive Ganga.

Then, at the command of Brahma, Ganga began her terrible descent, full of arrogance with the intention of even washing away Lord Shiva! The place in the Himalayas where Ganga descended is a picturesque and awe-inspiring spot, known as Gangotri. Lord Shiva, who knew Ganga's resolve, with a view to curing her arrogance, absorbed the entire waters of Ganga into his mighty matted hair (Jata)! Though Ganga learnt her lesson, Bhageeratha was disappointed as his purpose was not fulfilled. Again, when he invoked the grace of Shiva through tapas, out of compassion for Bhageeratha and in appreciation of his determination, Shiva released the waters in "Bindu Saras," in seven small streams. One stream of the Ganga followed Bhageeratha.

Bhageeratha's troubles were not at an end!

To be Continued

Let me not beg for the stilling of my pain, but for the heart to conquer it—
Vijay Corporation
65, Ideal Ind. Estate, Mathuradas Mills Compund, Lower Parel, Bombay - 13.

BHARAT DARSHAN

DHARMASTALA

By Dr. R. Vajreswari

HOPE you enjoyed the visit to the great Minakshi shrine and other shrines of Madurai. To-day, I am taking you to a unique 'Kshetra' that I had the opportunity of visiting recently. The place is known as 'Dharma Stala' (Holy place of Dharma).

Dharmastala is about forty miles east of Mangalore in Karnataka State. The picturesque fringe of hills attracts our attention as we travel towards Dharmastala. River Netravati flows about a mile from the place and pilgrims bathe in the river before going to the temple. The areca and coconut trees greet the visitors with a gentle nod. We are elated by this welcome. An unknown joy wells up in our hearts when we sight the majestic gateway to Dharmastala.

About 500 years ago, this place was chosen by the Gods for their noble mission. They tested and chose a family as their representative for carrying on charitable activities.

In the place known as Kuduma (place noted for charity), there was a chieftain named Biramanna Pergade. His wife was Ammudevi. They were Jains and were pious and noted for their generosity. Their family shrine was Sri Chandranatha Swamy Basadi. It was near the house of the chieftain. Their house was known as 'Nelyadi Beedu'. One day, the guardian angels of Dharma assumed human forms and came to Nelyadi Beedu on horses and elephants with their hosts.

The visitors were received warmly and were given a rich feast. Pleased with the hospitality shown to them, they said "Pergade, we are delighted with your generosity. Offer Nelyadi Beedu to us and worship us here. We will see that your wealth and charity increase". Thus they blessed the couple and disappeared. Only then, they realised that their visitors were divine and they had been chosen for divine work. As commanded, they made Nelyadi Beedu a place of worship and built a new house for themselves.

The Divinities appeared to the couple in their dreams from time to time and gave detailed instructions for worship. They said "we are four powerful Daivas—Kalarahu, Kalarkai, Kumaraswamy and Kanyakumari. Build shrines for us. Let festivals be organised regularly. Worship us with faith and devotion. The number of devotees will increase. Our vassal 'Annappa' will carry out our commands.

Relieve sufferings—physical and mental—of the people. We will reward you and your posterity

with everything. Dhana—Dharma should be continued at all times. We will protect you".

Pergade carried out the instructions of the Daivas. He built a shrine for the four 'Daivas' at the place chosen by them and installed them. Annappa, the vassal of the Daivas was commissioned to bring the Lingam of Sri Manjunatha Swamy from a lake at Kadri near Mangalore. The installation of the Lingam was done in a fitting manner.

Through the centuries, the family of 'Pergade'—which came to be known as "Heggade", became the chosen instrument for the great service of the Divine. Ever since, the eldest son of the family was chosen as the "Peetadhikari", the 'trustee' of the charities and activities of Dharmastala. The successive Heggades carried out their divine duties under the inspiration and guidance of the Divine. The fame and glory of Dharmastala came to be known widely. Today it is one of the greatest national pilgrim centres of India. It attracts Hindus, Jains, Christians and Muslims alike. Everyone goes for relief and blessings. One remarkable feature of Dharmastala is that all are treated equally. The pilgrims are fed in the neat and beautiful dining halls. Fine guest houses with all facilities are available, for the very asking. The rooms can be used for three days without any payment. Every one who serves, is courteous and

Sri Manjunatha Swamy

helpful. That in itself is a great gift! So we feel carefree, happy and peaceful as we move about in Dharmastala, the abode of Dharma.

Now, let us go into the temple for worship. The temple is simple but very impressive. We see the big temple bell in the office. We climb a few steps and we are in the temple. As we go round, first we see the shrine of 'Annappa'. He faces Sri Manjunathaswamy. This perhaps is an indication that he is ever ready to carry out the bidding of the Lord. We go to the Sanctum Sanctorum of Sri Manjunathaswamy (Manju-Snow; Natha—Lord) The Lord of the Snows gives us Darshan. The Shiva Linga is big. On either side of the Linga, are the Utsava images.

It is not how long life is but how good it is that matters.
Chinmaya Family, Kuwait.

There is a big golden 'Prabha', (halo) decorated with golden chatra, chamara, flag etc. In the mellow light of the wicker-lit lamps, we see the Lord of the Snow, glittering and glowing and shining. The peace that fills the place fills our hearts.

Next to that of the Lord is the shrine of Devi Kanyakumari and the three Daivas. There is a similar golden Prabha that serves as the background for the four deities. There is the Utsava image of Devi Kanyakumari also. As we go round the temple, we see Lord Ganapathi behind the shrine of Sri Manjunatha. As we are about to complete our rounds, we see the shrine of 'Ishta Devata'— Yes, he grants all your wishes. Be careful as to what you ask for.

We step out of the temple and go to the big park a few yards away. It is full of shady trees and resting spots. We go and sit there so that we really enjoy the 'filling peace'. There is a 'mini-zoo' in the park and that is meant for you. Run round and enjoy yourselves with your friends and come back!

Now we go to meet the trustee of Dharmastala. The present trustee is Sri Veerendra Heggade. It is a joy and a privilege to spend a few minutes in his presence. His nobility, dignity and simplicity is striking.

To be Continued

Mother's Corner

Do you have anything to say about your mother / child ? We invite mothers/ children to send us interesting experiences in not more than 450 words. The best will be published in Bal Vihar.

Amazing trees

THE largest forests of the world are the vast coniferous forests of the north U.S.S.R. The total wooded area is 2,700,000 acres which amounts to 25% of the world's forests.

The non vegetarian trees—Drossera and Ultricularia—eat insects.

The northern most plants are found at 83° N, in a very stunted form. They are the yellow poppy and the Arctic Willow.

The greatest altitude at which any flowering plant is found is 20,130 feet in the Himalayas.

The tallest trees in the world are a species called Coast Redwood, which grow only near the coast of California, and the tallest tree recorded is 367.8 feet.

The oldest recorded living tree is a bristlecone pine, growing at 10,750 feet above sea-level in eastern Nevada, U.S.A. Its recorded age in 1964 was 4,900 years!

The tree remotest from any other tree was found in an oasis in the Terane desert in Niger. There are no other trees within 31 miles.

The tallest recorded species of Bamboo is 115 feet in the Botanic Gardens of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.

The slowest growing tree is the Sitka Spruce, which requires 98 years to grow eleven (11) inches, with a diameter of less than one inch.

By Sonali Nadkarni (11 years).

CONTEMPLATION ON DISCIPLINE

By Lalitha Frazier

An illustrative story that precisely brings out this point is told about the mother who brought her young son to Mahatma Gandhi. It was her plan that if such a noble person who commanded the awe and reverence of society, inspired others to great sacrifice, were to give her son an advice, surely the son would follow it. So she asked the kindly Gandhiji to "tell him not to eat sugar", since all her scolding and efforts to keep sugar away from the boy had failed. With a wise smile the Mahatma quietly said : "Bring him back to me in two days". According to this directive, the mother returned with the child who was then told by the great man : "Stop eating sugar". And the mother was puzzled about the necessity of waiting for two days when the message would have been the same two days ago. She asked why they had to wait for these days and, again, the smiling reply came : "Because two days ago I was eating sugar!"

So being an effective figure of authority is based upon our own self-image, what we honestly know to be true about our own behavior. See the fallacy of asking someone else to do what we ourselves have not been able to do. For it is said by those who guide us in our continuing education in the realms of philosophy and religion, "mere listening, even memorizing is not enough. If you do not struggle hard to apply every word of it in your daily life, there is no progress". This necessity of making our knowledge **practical** leads to another view of our relationship as parent-child. Here is where we can apply all the teachings given by the spiritual study to directly benefit our children. Before meeting with the concepts of Vedanta, I had the firm conviction that I, as a mother, am a separate, distinct entity with the very serious job of imposing my rules on another. But, now, in putting the idea of the essential unity of all beings into practice as taught by this study, I see myself as not essentially separate from my child, but as playing the role of mother in relationship to this child. Thus childraising has a new freedom wherein I can perform my part, not with an eye to being ultimately 'right' or 'wrong' in my methods, but in viewing it as a challenge, a field to gauge how well the mother portrays the character. It is not to improve the child (who I assume is doing a perfect job in playing his part) that I give out my advices and commands, but it is improving to the utmost capacity, with creative imagination and inspired good-will my role as a mother. And the final critic, the expectant audience is me, alone.

To be continued.

CONTEMPLATION FOR MOTHERS

By Lalita Frazier

ON ATTENTION

We teach the child not by mere words as does a teacher telling a student **about** something to know. From the moment the infant comes to us we begin to give this attention. Knowing that the baby doesn't understand our words, still we talk and look adoringly upon the child and touch it fondly, all these actions pouring out from us from a spontaneous spring of affection. Attention is just this, this love to nurture, like a prayer wishing only for the child's benefit, an intention that it may just grow to manifest itself, reveal its now hidden potential nature, only so that we can look on in appreciation. Attention must be this in-tention, a pure motive to just allow every stage to happen, come as it will, and we as mothers are guiding, supporting, feeding whenever necessary.

Then comes this relaxed mood that springs from seeing clearly what is our essential relationship, our most effective attitude, to take towards mothering—this mood of peaceful, confident giving of attention. And we **can** relax because nature has already established our way to be a successful mother—the rhythm, the timing is set within both mother and child. The infant cries when it needs attention and soon a communication is established where we know or can soon find out what will calm the child's agitation. In a very significant way it is like calming yourself—to respond to the needs of another. And just as you cannot ignore your own heartfelt desires for long, the mother finds fulfillment in the quietening of the child's cries—for attention.

Let us not overlook that even when the child grows to the stage where it expresses in words its thoughts and feelings, this basic relationship still exists—that of giving just simple attention. And because of misunderstanding this essential need, we may start encountering frustrations and a sense of failure as a mother. The pure joy of nurturing the helpless and totally receptive infant changes as the child must naturally assert its independence with daring inquisitiveness and non-cooperation. At this time the mother may experience the child as a nuisance or a discipline problem.

To be Continued.

A 'Chat' about Baisakhi

"ASHOK, why are you wearing new clothes today?" asked Ramesh.

"It's Baisakhi today" he replied.

"Baisakhi—what is that? Never heard about it before."

"It is our festival. In fact all of us had been to the beach this morning for a swim".

"Why a swim?" And then he added, "What sort of a festival is it when we have no holiday in school?"

"True, even I can't understand why they don't give us a holiday on our festival", replied Ashok.

"But tell me one thing, Ashok. Why do you celebrate Baisakhi?"

"That part is still a mystery to me. As far as I am concerned, I know I can go for a swim on that day, wear new clothes and mum prepares good food".

"Let's go and ask didi. She'll be able to tell us".

"Let's go".

"Didi, Please tell us something about Baisakhi", said Ramesh.

"Baisakhi is celebrated on April 13 each year by Punjabis, Sikhs, Jats and even Bengalis."

"April 13, Didi?"

"Yes. Why are you so surprised?"

"But thirteen is an unlucky number. So how can one celebrate Baisakhi on April 13?" asked Ramesh.

"No, that's a wrong belief. In fact Punjabis, Sikhs, and Jats celebrate their 'New Year' on April 13. Baisakhi also marks the beginning of the New Year for them".

"In Punjab and other places in North India, it is also the beginning of harvest time. The farmers of North India start cutting crops from this day onwards. In fact all good things are started from this auspicious day.

And do you know they also have a Mela on this day?"

"Didi, what do they do in the Mela?" asked Ashok.

"Don't you remember Ashok, the last time we went to Cross Maidan to see an exhibition-cum-sale? Well it's a modified version of the Mela. The only difference is that people don't have Bhangra dances in the exhibition-cum-sale".

"Achha, so you mean they get together in the outskirts of their town and have this giant wheel, merry—go—round and things like that? Besides that ,they sing and dance and make merry?"

"Yes, they all come dressed in colourful clothes, specially in yellow and green".

"Why yellow and green?" asked Ramesh.

"To signify harvest time. The crops are ripe and ready for cutting and are yellowish in colour. In fact they make sweets like 'Mitha chawal' (sweet rice) which is yellow in colour".

"Ashok, has your mummy made Mitha chawal today?"

"I think so, yes".

"Well then, I am coming over for lunch to your place today."

"Sure, "replied Ashok.

"Wait, Wait. But Didi, you for-

got to tell us why Bengalis celebrate Baisakhi?"

"Bengalis celebrate Baisakhi on the next day that is April 14, as Pahela Baisakhi".

"Do they also dance and wear yellow clothes?"

"Don't be stupid, Ramesh", said Ashok "They are not Punjabis."

"It is not that", Didi interrupted. Each one of us has our own way of celebrating. Bengalis have a long puja on that day. They also wear new clothes and prepare good food". "Oh I see! But Ashok, you said you had been for a swim. Is it necessary to go for a swim on Baisakhi and do Bengalis also go for a swim?" asked Ramesh. "I don't know much, but even my Grandma came to the beach for a dip" said Ashok.

"It is like this. On any such auspicious day, people have bath in holy water and start their day. In Amritsar most of them go to the Golden Temple and bathe in the holy water Then they pray and set off to enjoy themselves".

"What fun, didi ! I would love to be in Punjab on a Baisakhi day", said Ramesh.

By Bela Pandit

Please Note

Payments for the subscriptions or their renewals or advertisements should be made in the name of Central Chinmaya Mission Trust and not in the name of Bal Vihar.

Manager,
Bal Vihar.

A TALENTED DANCER!

Sangeetha Raman with Swami Dayanandaji on the occasion of the inauguration of the Vignanamandir, Hyderabad on June 24, 1978.

Sangeetha was only seven years old when she won the second prize in the All India competition in 1978. Ever since, she has been bagging a string of prizes and giving many performances.

On 3rd May 1979, she danced in front of Swami Harinamanandaji at Baroda; on 22nd May 1979, once again in front of Swami Dayanandaji at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya. This talented child is the student of Master V. S. Rama Murthy.

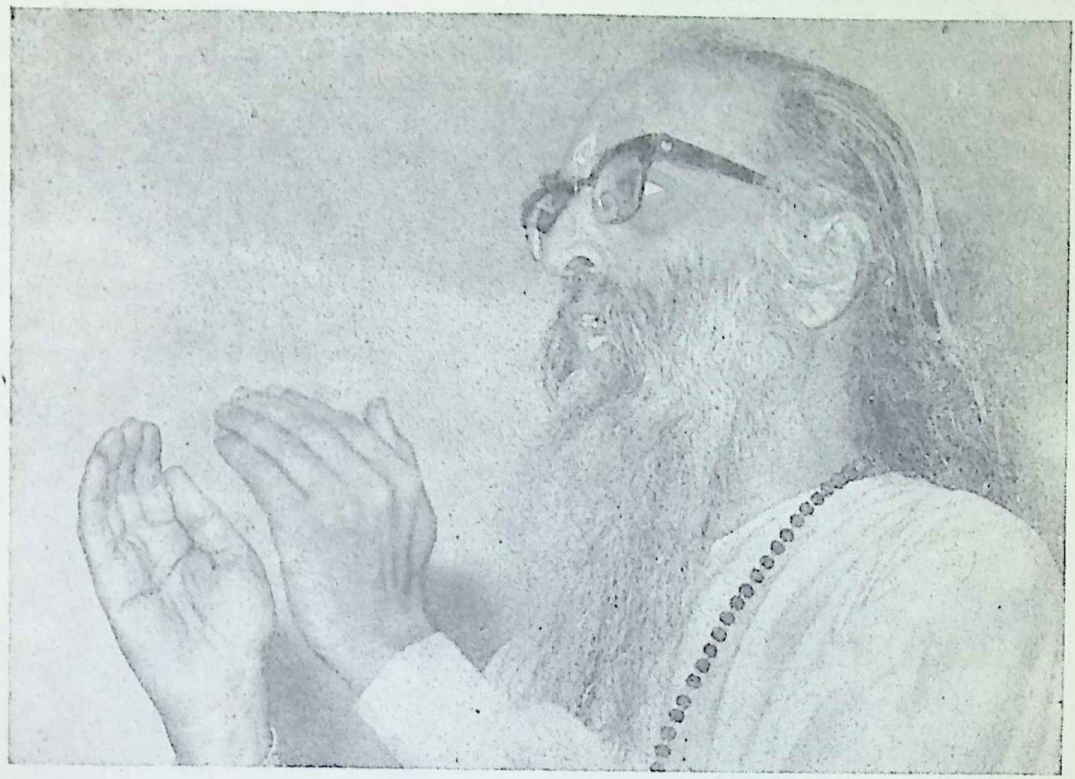
THE SPARROW

There lived a sparrow; her body was brown
And often she would flutter down,
Twit, twit she would sing,
And often worms she would bring.
She would look at the sun,
And say all her work was done.

By Sharmila Uchil.

"LIFE IS ALWAYS ONE"

—Swami Chinmayananda



Swamiji answers some of the questions put to him after his open heart surgery.

1. *How do you feel after your operation?*

Beautiful. Just as I was before when I was young.

2. *Can you explain the nature of your surgery for our readers?*

It is called bypass. I had three bypasses. (Three arteries supplying blood to the heart were completely blocked and two were partially blocked (50% and 90%). Three bypasses and one anastomosis (hooking on to a fourth artery) were performed, allowing the heart to get good blood supply).

3. *Would you say that this is your second life?*

Life is always one. There is no second life. Living in the body is only one incident. Life is infinite. Death is only a transfer from this body and the present surroundings. We move into a new body to continue the play of life in new surroundings with a new mother, father, brothers, sisters etc. In all these experiences, one who can always fix his mind upon Him, wanting nothing but Him, for him the play of life is over. Then we could hurry home, and it becomes "HARI OM".

4. *Why have you decided to settle down in Siddhabari after April* 1982?

All these years I have been serving you children. In the Himalayas from Kashmir to Almora (check your map), there are lots of villages. In these villages live some of the poorest people in the world with nobody to serve them, often starving, yearly freezing in the snow with very little to do with the world as is known to us. I am going there to serve these children who have no medical help, are very unfortunate and their parents know nothing and have no chance of knowing what you know in Bala Vihar. I am helping them. Thus at Siddhabari, I am with your brothers and sisters in the mountain (pahad) serving those who live there (pahadis).

5. *In your opinion, how can children contribute to the progress of the country*?

By growing to be hefty, healthy citizens of the country, inspired by great characters like Rama, Hanumanji, Krishna, Karna and others.

CHEERFULNESS

—By H. P. Eswar

The CHINMAYA YUVA KENDRA WING of the CHINMAYA MISSION, Bombay had announced its programme of presenting a "Bhakti Sangeet" evening by the famous singer Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi at the Shanmukhananda Hall on Saturday, 18th October, 1980 well in advance.

While in U.S.A., around end August, 1980 Pujya Gurudev developed blockage in some of His arteries supplying blood to His heart which called for immediate surgical correction.

Because of the operation, he had to extend His stay in U.S.A. and a number of engagements in India had to be postponed or cancelled. We thought that He might not be able to attend the above function.

"I shall certainly be there on that evening. As a group of young men with vision and spirit, you all have been behaving splendidly and working diligently as an inspired team" was the message that he had sent to the Bombay Yuva Kendra on August, 8th 1980 for the Souvenir.

Returning to India on 17th October quite late, He did attend the full programme on 18th October. We can't say that He had no pain. His right leg on which the bandage was still there must have pained. One vein had been removed from this leg to make three bypasses to his heart.

Many of us, anxious to know about His health, became a source of nuisance to Him. After the start of the programme at 7-00 P. M., the electricity failed rendering the loudspeaker system, lights and airconditioning system totally ineffective. Power had failed on a considerable stretch of territory. Despite frantic efforts, there was no improvement in the situation. But the programme continued. Swamiji, glued to His front seat, was thoroughly enjoying the programme regardless of the failure around. He immensely enjoyed every bit of the Concert. Till the end of the programme, power could not be restored. Swamiji was not upset. Nobody would have imagined that it was the same person who had had a very major operation a few days ago. He was fortitude personified! He was a limitless fountain of inspiration.

Despite His bad health, He not only stayed till the entire programme was over but also congratulated the volunteers and others, met the guests and joked with them!

So let us learn the art of smiling when circumstances seem to overpower us.

May He lead us from darkness to light for many more years so that we are able to give the maximum happiness to the maximum people for the maximum time.

BAL VIHAR CHILDREN'S EXHIBITION

Calling all children!

Here is a chance to exhibit your talent! You are welcome to bring (latest by 20th of May), any of your paintings, collages, handicrafts, stamp collections or coin collections to be displayed at the fair. These will be returned to you after the fair to be held on Sunday, June 1st, 1980

In the case of paintings, collages and handicrafts, there will be two age groups :— 5 years to 9 years 11 months

10 years to 15 years

Only children upto 15 years can take part. Please note that you must mention your name and date of birth on each entry. The best entry in each section will be given a prize.

The paintings or collages should be 18 x 11 inches.

A collage is an artwork with any waste materials, cotton, cloth etc. pasted on a surface. The handicrafts include embroidery, beadwork, wirework, toymaking etc.

Stamp collectors may kindly ensure that no loose stamps are sent.

If you are interested in taking part, please contact Mr. Kamalakshan, Bal Vihar on phone number 583004 between 8.30 a.m. and 12 p. m. to give in your names and addresses at the earliest. Or you can write to us at the following address :— Children's Exhibition, Bal Vihar, Central Chinmaya Mission Trust, Powai Park Drive, Bombay 400 072.

SPECIAL DISCOUNT OFFER!

Here is your chance to get Bal Vihar at Rs. 12 i. e. at a discount of 20% on the usual yearly subscription rate of Rs. 15. This offer is valid on new subscriptions received between June 1 to 30, 1980 The old subscribers need not be disappointed for they will receive (free!) a beautiful photo of Swami Chinmayananda with the June issue.

Kindly send your cheque / M. O. for Rs. 12 to "Central Chinmaya Mission Trust," Powai Park Drive, Bombay 400 072.

Think !

Try to help the misguided ones to see their folly, and stand up on their own sturdy feet in life.

—Swami Chinmayananda

Try to help those who are on the wrong path to realize their mistakes and to rely on themselves. This is the thought for the month.

Based on it, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Balvihar. The last date for sending in entries is June 15th, so send your entry soon. Kindly note that the entrants should not be more than fifteen years old.

The Winner!

The Winner of the thought for the month of February is V. Shyam of Durgapur (14 years). Congratulations, Shyam! We have sent you "Bal Ramayana" as a prize.

The gathering gloom of depression will fade away in the light of cheer and hope.

—Swami Chinmayananda.

ONCE there was a leader in Scotland whose name was Robert Bruce. He was defeated by the English soldiers and had to flee to avoid being caught. The English soldiers pursued him. But, he proved too clever for them. He somehow managed to hide in a cave whose mouth was covered with creepers.

As he lay in the cave, he thought that it was useless to resist the British. They were too strong for him and his own people were divided. At that time, he spotted a spider trying to build a web. It was trying to put one long thread between two jutting rocks, which would serve as an anchor for the whole web. But the distance was too great for the spider to bridge it.

Robert, who had noticed it, muttered to himself, "just like me". But the spider was not to be beaten. It tried again and again, forty, fifty times until it succeeded. Once the anchor had been made, the spider built its web very quickly.

Robert's gloom of depression disappeared to be replaced by a new determination. He said to himself, "If a mere spider can keep on trying until it succeeds, why can't I?" He went out of the cave and collected all his soldiers. In his next battle with the English, he emerged victorious. This victory is often known as the great Scottish victory of Bannockburn.

We, too, must be like Robert Bruce. It is almost impossible to be successful in every work at the first try. We should learn from our failures for "failures are the pillars of success". Determination is indeed the light which removes the dark, sorrowful gloom.

By V. Shyam

Welcome Song

By Vikash (11 years)

Swamiji is here
The Children's dear
Swamiji is here
Have no fear
Stories will be told
About the children who are bold
Glory to Thee
Glory to Me
Glory to Swamiji.

RIDDLES

1. Which part of the fish weighs the most?
2. Which is the most difficult key to turn?
3. What has no teeth and yet bites?
4. Which is the best day to make pancakes?

Answers on Page 27

CRICKET QUIZ

By Rajat Batra and Chatardev Singh.

Are you an ardent cricket fan? If you are, try answering the following questions. The answers will be published in the June issue.

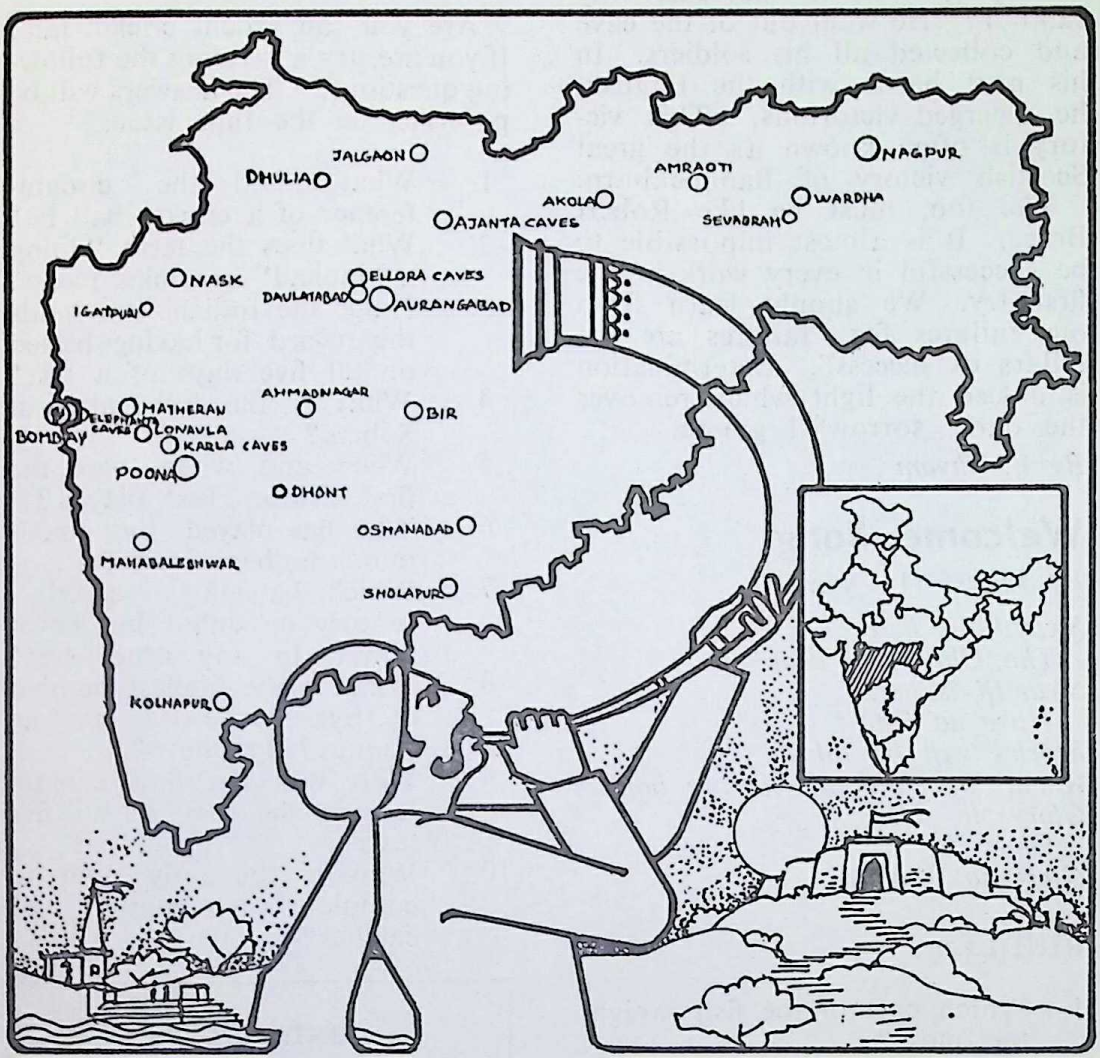
1. What should the circumference of a cricket ball be?
2. What does the term "doing a Mankad" in cricket mean?
3. Name the Indian who holds the record for having batted on all five days of a test?
4. What is the full name of Sobers?
5. When and where was the first Cricket Test played?
6. Who has played the maximum number of tests?
7. Which batsman scored a century on debut but never played in any other test?
8. What is the highest number of byes conceded in an innings? By whom?
9. Who was the first captain to win the toss in all five tests?
10. Who is the only man to complete a century of catches?

CONTRIBUTORS

Please note that at the end of every article, story or poem sent in, your name and address should be written. It is not enough to put your address on the covering letter.

MAHARASHTRA DAY

By Bela Pandit



"ARREY Didi, how come you are at home today?" asked Bablu.

"Today's a holiday".

"Holiday? Today is Thursday, isn't it?"

"Yes, but it is Maharashtra Day".

"Maharashtra Day?"

"Yes. The first of May is celebrated as Maharashtra Day all over Maharashtra".

"Oh, I see. Didi, will you tell

me why it is called Maharashtra Day?"

"On the first of May 1961, the state of Bombay was divided into the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat".

"Do you mean to say that before 1st of May 1961, Gujarat and Maharashtra were one?" interrupted Bablu.

"Yes, of course. After independence, the states were not formed immediately. And Maharashtra was not Maharashtra then, but was known as Bombay State. This included the present Maharashtra and Gujarat but not the princely provinces like Baroda, Junagadh, Morvi etc."

"Didi, then why were they separated?"

"The struggle for a separate state of Maharashtra had begun in 1954. And the struggle was not for a separate Maharashtra/Gujarat but more to decide whether Bombay should remain in Maharashtra or Gujarat".

"Was this division only for these two states?"

"No, no. Not at all. In fact the Congress Working Committee had passed a resolution that all the provinces should be divided on the basis of language. When the separate states of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu were formed, Maharashtra demanded a separate state.

"So didi, it's only a holiday for people living in Maharashtra?"

"No, the first of May is a holiday all over the world".

"Why?"

"Bablu, the first of May is celebrated as 'May Day' throughout the world. Maharashtra day coincides with May Day".

"Oh, I see. Thank you very much, Didi"

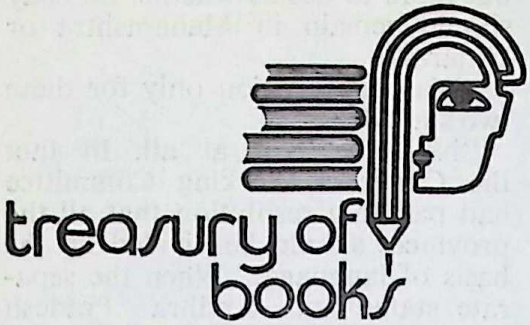
MAY DAY

May Day is the International Labour Day. It's an important holiday in socialist and communist countries. In the Soviet Union, it symbolises freedom from the Czars. For this reason, Russians embrace each other on this day.

It originated in Europe in 1890 in support of labour demands. In the U. S., it stands for an eight hour working day. Labour parades and political demonstrations are organised on this day.

May day is also celebrated as a spring festival. As part of May Day celebrations, revellers dance around a high pole decorated with flowers and ribbons called the "May Pole".

The words "May Day" represent a distress signal too. This signal is mostly used when a ship is in danger on the high seas calling for help from nearby ships. It originated from the French "M'aidez" which means "Help me". These days, it is a common distress signal used by aircraft and ships when in danger.



Dog Detective Ranjha

By Partap Sharma
Macmillan
Pages : 152; Price : Rs. 50/-

"WOOF". Who could that be? Dog Detective Ranjha, of course! There he goes, tracking down criminals with his wonderful nose. All he requires is a wee whiff of any of the thief's belongings, say, his shoes, or cap or even handkerchief. And he's off. Tracking. Sniffing. Circling. And the culprit is caught! At a word from his master, Ranjha pounces on the terrified villain.

Ranjha's very first case involves tracking down a dog-killer. In the process, he almost gets killed. But nevertheless, continues until he has the killer safely in his custody. From then on, he moves from mystery to mystery.

One of his most interesting cases is the one on human bones. Here, Ranjha discovers some bones hidden in the undergrowth of a jungle. In Ranjha's words, "Perhaps the most difficult and irritating case I've ever had to work on was the case of the Human Bones. What was particularly annoying was that, for a number of days, the humans around me didn't even realise that a crime had been committed". Not only does Ranjha discover the crime, he even solves the case.

Aside from these mysteries, the book has its warm little touches which makes it so different from other books. The human world as looked at from a dog's point of view—"I thought I'd find out more about this Woof. He seemed a strange sort of fellow. So I wobbled carefully towards him and took a good sniff at his shoes and trousers. The scent of his body was pleasing and I think my tail must have wagged. Now that is one of the awful things about being a dog—you can't help showing your feelings".

Another time , Ranjha thinks, "I 've now come to the conclusion that human beings also need to be trained so that they learn to live with other animals". Then, we have Tughlak, the cynical Labrador, who teaches Ranjha the ways of the world. His conversations with Ranjha are small masterpieces in themselves.

Written in clear, simple English, the author has achieved the almost-impossible—bringing out a book meant for children and adults alike.

However the price of Rs. 50/- is much too high. This could put it out of reach of many readers. May be, it could be brought out in paperback.

By Shalu

SAI BABA OF SHIRDI

THE STORY OF HIS LIFE

By Mrinalini V. Sarabhai

Many were the people he helped in their sorrow. It did not matter what religion they were. He knew their thoughts, even before they came to see him. Once, a Brahmin who was a devout worshipper of Sri Rama went with a friend to Shirdi. "I am coming with you", he said to his friend, "but I will not bow to Sai Baba, as only Rama is my God". He went to the mosque and stood outside watching the puja that was taking place. Suddenly, he ran inside and fell at the feet of Sai Baba. His companion was surprised and later asked him, how

he had changed his mind. "I saw Sri Rama himself standing there," was the reply.

There were amusing incidents also, for Baba did not like people having prejudices. Once a man went with his mother-in-law to Shirdi. He was a very orthodox Brahmin and would not even touch onions. His mother-in-law innocently started cutting onions to prepare the food. When he saw this, he scolded her severely. She was deeply hurt. Soon, his grand daughter complained of pain in her eye and would not stop crying. The devotee rushed to Baba to enquire what was to be done. Sai Baba, who knew nothing of what had happened, told him to go to his mother-in-law, get an onion and rub the child's eye with it. That was a lesson for him indeed!

Baba healed the sick with 'Udhi' or the sacred ash from the fire which he constantly kept alight. That fire is still kept burning and all devotees even today, have complete faith in its healing power. Baba used to say, "Wherever you may be, think of me, and I am with you".

As one of his devotees has said, "Sri Sai Baba's methods of giving spiritual help were not the usual ones. He gave no mantra (incantation) or upadesa. He never spoke of yoga, pranayama or kundalini or any special terms that are usually used. But when anything went wrong with anyone who was following any such marga (path), he would come to Sai Baba and would be helped".

His upadesa was also invisible, and many people felt and still feel his grace. "Only keep still and I will do the rest," he used to say. Sometimes, he would lay his hand on a devotee's head or just pass it over him. And these actions had a tremendous influence over the persons concerned. He took complete responsibility for all those who came to him or even thought of him. Often, people saw him in other places, and even spoke to him. Later, they would learn that Baba had never left Shirdi. When asked about these incidents, he would reply, "I will go with you, I don't need a train for travelling". He was never bound by his physical body, which he would point to and say, "This is my house, I am not here. By guru has taken me away".

His words to his followers were always deep with meaning. "The sky is cloudy. It will rain. The crop will grow and ripen. Then the clouds will disperse. Why are you afraid?"

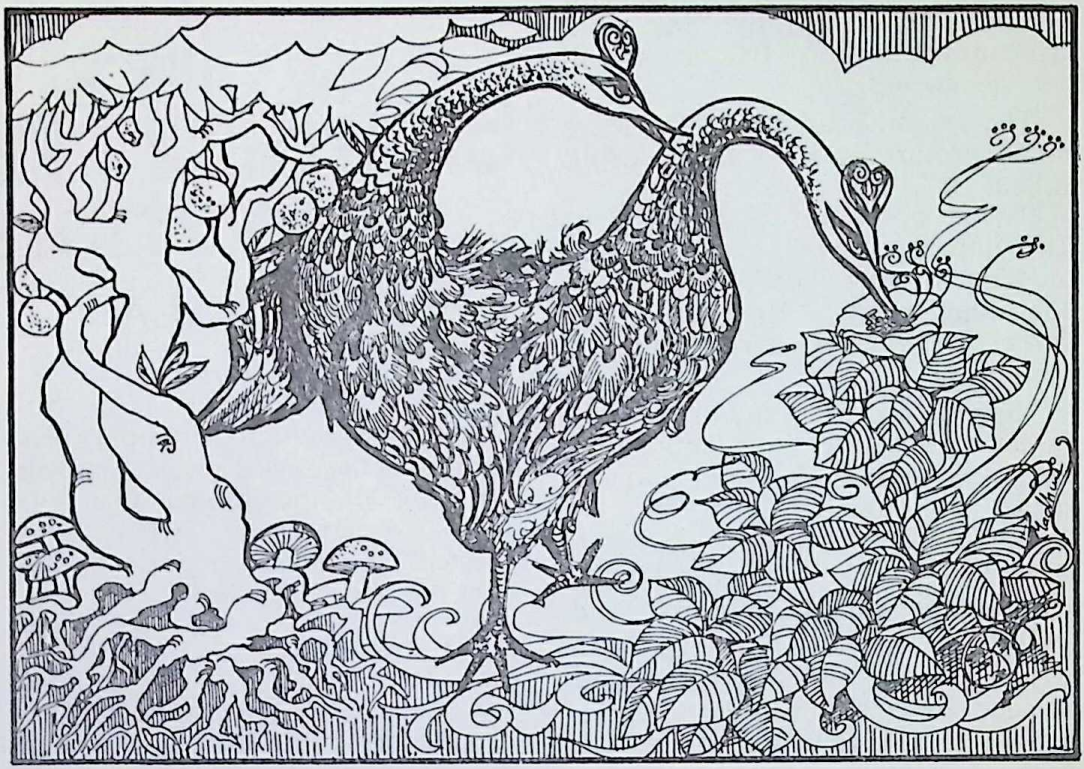
To the listener, this meant that at the moment, her mind was despondent. The rain was the experiences she would have to go through, the ripening crop was the beginning of grace and with grace would come bliss and enlightenment. Sometimes, Baba would make one person answer the doubts of another. He would tell him to go and listen to something another man was reading aloud, and sure enough the disciple found his own answer.

To be Continued

THE BHARUNDA BIRD

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

Retold by Lalogue Postvala



MOHAN was sulking one afternoon in March on the playfield. Though the best bowler of his team, his bowling was erratic and listless. Not having been selected for the captaincy, he wanted to teach his team mates a lesson. He decided not to play well in the cricket match. The team lost because the players were not united.

This incident is similar to what happened to the Bharunda bird in the Panchatantra fable.

Some Bharunda birds lived near a lake in a certain forest. They were very strange birds. They had one body and two heads—somewhat like the Siamese twins.

The Bharunda birds considered themselves very lucky. They often boasted "Of all the creatures in the forest, we're the best. With our extra head, we can think faster and see better."

One summer day, one of the birds was hopping around for food. With

its two heads, the bird could easily see in all directions. It flew backwards and forward, pecking at various twigs and insects.

While sauntering about, one of the heads spied a big flower filled with nectar. The head which saw the flower cried joyfully, "My, what a beautiful flower! Its nectar will be so sweet."

The second head said, "Do leave some nectar for me. Don't drink all of it".

"What nonsense! I saw it first. It belongs to me".

"That's very rude", complained the other head. "How soon you forget the worm I shared with you yesterday!"

"Sorry. I don't mind sharing an insect. They are in plenty. But nectar is scarce. I want to drink it all by myself."

So saying, he dipped his beak into the flower. The second head pecked at its neck but the first head would not let the flower go.

The enraged and frustrated head decided to teach the other head a lesson. He saw a poisonous root growing close by. He pecked at it so that he could inflict a tummy ache on the other.

Both the heads were foolish. They did not realise that whatever the heads ate—nectar or poison—was fed to the same belly. The poison entered the body. The bird fell down dead.

Therefore it is wisely said :
Bharunda birds will teach you why
The disunited must surely die,
For, single bellied, double-necked,
They took a diet incorrect.

bharat darshan

DHARMASTALA

By Dr. R. Vajreswari.

His concern about the people's problems and the advice given, removes the sting of the problem. One feels that one has gained what was wanted. Such is the personal impact of Sri Heggade.

He has completed the projects started by his illustrious father. He has launched on new schemes. One of them is the mobile hospital that has been started. This meets the medical needs of the rural areas around Dharmakshetra. A mass free-marriages scheme has been started. Marriages are conducted at the expense of 'Dharmakshetra' on certain simple conditions. This has become very popular as revealed by the ever-increasing number of applicants for this privileged nature wedding ceremony.

Another special activity of Sri Heggade is the special role played in settling civil disputes. It has

been the tradition in India to settle disputes, in front of the temple and by the temple authorities. This great tradition flourishes in Dharmastala even today. The judgement pronounced by Sri Heggade is accepted and the parties go in peace and happiness.

"Mathu Bida Manjunatha," "Whatever is said in the name of Manjunatha, should be followed." "Satyam" (truth) is given its rightful place in Dharmastala. Sri Heggade advises and helps the devotees to keep their word. Many wonderful incidents are told about the experiences of devotees who were helped to keep their word after undergoing trials and tribulations.

Before we take leave of Dharmastala, let us remember its deities. The presiding deity of the Kshetra is Sri Manjunatha Swamy, the Giver of Boons. Sree Chandranatha Swamy of the Jain Basadi is the Giver of Peace. Sri Bahubali Swamy is an embodiment of renunciation and dedication. It was in 1973 that the great image of Sri Bahubali was installed in Bahubali Vihar. This image is 52 ft. high and it is next in size only to the famous Gomateswara at Sravanabelegla. (The above two temples are away from the main shrine and we will visit them a little later!)

The role of Sri Heggade as the Trustee, Administrator and Spokesman of the Divine is a unique one. All the divinely directed charitable, educational and social activities of Dharmastala could be brought under the fourfold qualities—Sraddha(devotion),tyaga (dedication) Satsankalpa (determination) and Karma (duty). Sri Veerendra Heggade is a living embodiment of these qualities and under him the noble mission of Dharmastala is bound to yield very rich harvests in future.

An Encounter with English Cricketers

By Amrita Neogi (15 *years*)

I am a real crazy cricket fan. I began taking interest just last year. And now I have got autographs of the entire Australian team, most of the players of the Indian team and the Pakistanis. But all this time someone else got the autographs for me. This time I had to get the autographs of the M.C.C. myself. Of course, my friends would come along, but just imagine, for the first time in my life I was going to approach a cricketer for an autograph.

In school, my friends Radha, Shilpi and Fatima planned to visit the Taj where the players were staying. I was quite thrilled and planned to take my younger sister along. I thought it would all be very simple as Radha's mother works as a reservation manager at the Taj.

Poverty is your treasure—
M/s. Jai Hind Oil Mills
387, Narsi Natha Street, Bombay-400 009.

It was a Monday, when we planned to go. School got over at 3.50 p.m. My sister and I quickly rushed to our car. On the way back, we stopped as my sister had to buy an autograph book.

On reaching home we had a quick bath and snack. Then we rushed out. On the way, we picked up our friends. Altogether, we were five of us. I began building castles in the air. Fatima said that she had asked her cousin to meet us in the hotel lobby, and that he would introduce us to the Indian players. He knew them very well and had given them receptions many a time. Oh! My excitement knew no bounds.

At last we reached the Taj. I told my companions that it was necessary to behave like polite young girls, and not run and scream about the place. After all, it was an Intercontinental hotel.

We walked up to the lobby just to find Fatima's cousin not there. She hastily gave him a ring. He said that he had come there an hour ago, and not finding us, had gone back. So, we did not bother to ask him to return.

Radha asked us to wait in the lobby. She went to meet her mother. After a while, she was back and had with her the room numbers of Ian Botham and the team manager, Mr. Alec Bedser.

We got into the lift, excitedly. When it stopped, the five of us walked out like sophisticated ladies. There was a security man following us all along, saying "excuse me, excuse me". But we pretended not to hear him.

Finally we were in front of room No. 586! The door was open and there was a trolley in front with two men on either side. On it was dirty linen, to be taken to the laundry. We could hear someone in the room, speaking with an English accent over the telephone. Just then the security man said aloud, "excuse me, ma'am, I am asking you a question. Whom would you like to meet?" We were struck dumb. Radha was right in front. She said to him "well, we er...er.. er want to meet Mr Alec Bedser".

The security man shook his head saying that he was very sorry. Mr. Bedser was out and would be back at 7 p.m. , while the other man echoed loudly "aare, woh to dus baje aayega. Tabhi ana". We knew it was all nonsense, but did not want to argue with them. The security man asked us to wait in the lobby. Just imagine our despair! All our dreams were shattered.

We went down cursing him all the while. We then went to the lobby and just sat there not knowing what to do. And to our surprise there was that security man once again. He asked us why we were sitting there, and before we could reply, he asked us to wait in the coffee shop.

We decided not to dance to his tune. So off we went, visiting all

A noble heart never thrusts itself forward for attention. Its words are rare gems—
of great value and seldom displayed.
Vijay Corporation
65, Ideal Ind. Estate, Mathuradas Mills Compound, Bombay-400 013.

the shops in the hotel. By then, people started noticing our group in the Taj. So we decided to go to a nearby hotel and have some snacks. On our way, we met a group of boys around our age. Two of them were Europeans and the rest were Indians. They began showing off, saying that they had some influence and could get the autographs. But I noticed their sorrowful expressions. They had probably tried already but failed.

After having the snacks, we walked back to the Taj and entered from the back door. I was still annoyed with the security man, and decided to tell him off if we met him. My friends and my sister walked ahead of me and I was a few yards behind them. Just then I saw a gang of foreigners before me. At once, I recognised David Gower. He had returned from a swim. I stopped him at once, "Could you kindly give me your autograph?", I asked him. "Oh yes. Sure, sure" was the reply. It did take me some time to open my bag and take out my autograph book. I looked at him to see whether he was getting impatient. He gave me a smile, which made all my nervousness disappear. There were some more cricketers around him. They gave me their autographs. Noticing my success, my friends and sister came forward quickly with their autograph books.

I noticed three of the English cricketers walking in. I distinctly remember they were Graham Stevenson, his wife, Peter Willey and Graham Willey. They entered a room behind us. As we were walking away, I told Radha and the others, that we were missing a golden opportunity. I asked them to come with me and enter that room. But they were hesitant.

Some one must take the initiative, so I walked up and waited for a while. Then I took a deep breath and opened the door wide.

It was the Chinese Restaurant. I was held up by the waiter. He asked me "What do you want, ma'am?" Boldly, I replied "I have come to take their autographs". "Oh! But you will be disturbing them. You see they are having an early dinner", he said. "Oh! forget you" was my answer . He began laughing. I walked upto the table where the players sat. As I reached the table, I was tongue tied. I did not know what to say. Just imagine four pairs of eyes staring at you. Finally, I spoke up and said "Excuse me. Would you mind giving me your autographs?" "Oh no, no. Not at all", was their prompt reply. My book was passed around and each of them signed. They kept looking at my kaftan, the necklace I wore and my fancy bag.

I decided to talk to them. "So how do you like India?" "Very nice, nice, yeah" was what they said together. "And the Indians?" "Oh! lovely people". Then they began asking me questions. They asked me whether I was going to see the match "Yes, I shall", I replied. "Oh! Hope to meet you there", they said. I just said to myself "I would also like to meet you all. But what about the security men?" After some time, Shilpi and the rest

came in but on entering were held up by the bearer. I signalled to them and said "Leave him. Just come here." After the conversation, they said good bye to us and we left.

Shilpi did a stupid thing. But it all added to the fun. She went to a foreigner and asked him "Are you a cricketer?" "Do I look like one?" was his polite reply. "No" said Shilpi and came running back to us. The gentleman concerned looked at us and started laughing.

RAMAYANA

Bhageeratha

By Anantha Narayanan

For, as Ganga in her course, damaged the Yagna - Kund of Rishi Jahnu, he drank all the waters by his yogic powers. Bhageeratha, who never lost hope, patiently pleaded with the Rishi for the release of Ganga. With the added pleadings of the Devas, who admired the perseverance of Bhageeratha for the noble purpose, the Rishi released the waters through his ear. Since Ganga was reborn out of the Rishi, she is know as Jahnavi. Then, the holy Ganga reached Patala and enabled Bhageeratha to purfiy and perform the rites for his ancestors, thus helping them to attain heaven. This, in brief, was the origin and story of the holy river Ganga, which to this day, is not only a great boon for the prosperity of Bharat but has also produced on its holy banks, many saints and sages who continue to inspire the masses in their spiritual path!

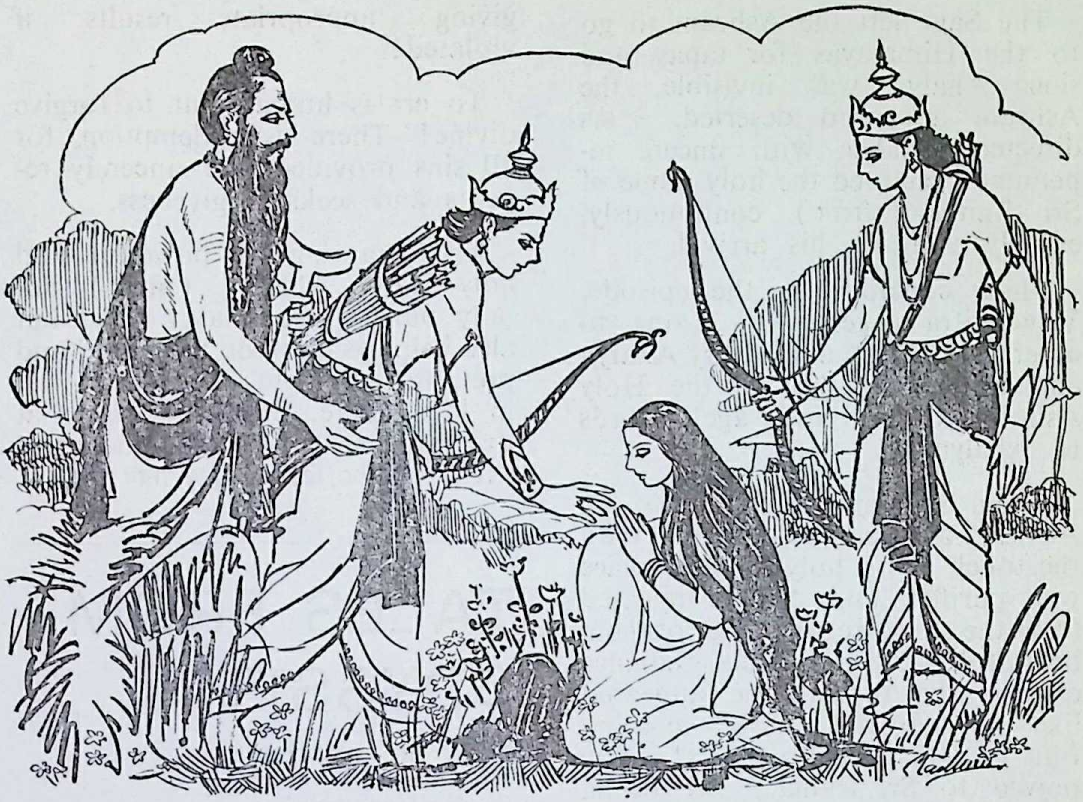
Historically, the name of King Bhageeratha thus stands for patience and perseverance till the goal is reached and serves as a glittering example for people who feel easily dejected by obstacles in the achievement of their objectives !

When Viswamitra completed the story, Sri Rama and Lakshmana were thrilled to hear the episode and resolved to be like King Bhageeratha!

After their stay in the Visala City, Viswamitra and party moved towards Mithila. As they approached the outskirts of the city, the princes sighted another charming Ashram. However, unlike the other Ashrams, it appeared very deserted, with not even a single Rishi staying there. Sri Rama was naturally very curious and wished to know from his Guru whose Ashram it was and the reasons why there was no one staying there. Viswamitra narrated another episode.

Ahalya — Patita Pavana Rama

The Ashram belonged to the great Sage Gautama, who lived in serenity there with his wife Ahalya. Ahalya was the most beautiful lady created by Lord Brahma and as there were many contenders for the marriage, including Indra, the King of Devas, Brahma gave her in marriage to the great and holy sage Gautama. However, the disappointed Indra was waiting for an opportunity to fulfil his desire to meet Ahalya.



Once during Sage Gautama's absence, Indra under the disguise of her husband, the Rishi, seduced Ahalya. Though she could see through the disguise of Indra, she momentarily fell a prey to temptation, being vainful of her beauty that could even attract the King of Devas!

This act of Adharma was, however, shortlived. For, as Indra was trying to get away, he saw the mighty Gautama entering the hermitage! The Rishi knew what had happened through his yogic power. Though Indra prostrated to the sage and sought pardon, the mighty sage, in order to teach a lesson to humanity cursed him thus: "Since you have fallen from Dharma and Truth and descended to the animal level—you shall become impotent". Indra returned to Devaloka in utter shame, as a eunuch!!

As for Ahalya, since she had fallen from her high and holy stature, the Rishi cursed her to spend a stone-life for many long years! Gautama ordered her, "You shall do severe penance, living on air, and unseen by anyone. When your sins are washed away through severe penance and repentance, the embodiment of Dharma, Sri Rama, on his way to Mithila, will step into the Ashram and release you from

the curse."

The Sage left the Ashram to go to the Himalayas for tapas and since Ahalya was invisible, the Ashram appeared deserted. As directed, Ahalya, with sincere repentance, chanted the holy name of Sri Rama (श्रीराम) continuously, eagerly awaiting his arrival.

Thus, concluding the episode, Viswamitra asked Sri Rama to enter the Ashram and purify Ahalya and bring back life to the Holy Ashram to fulfil the sage's words to Ahalya.

When Sri Rama stepped into the Ashram, a miracle happened. With the touch of his holy feet, the place was purified and Ahalya released from the curse, regained her original beautiful form with added radiance due to the tapas. She appeared like the bright moon coming out of the dark clouds! She bowed to Sri Rama. Sri Rama and Lakshmana bowed and touched the purified mother Ahalya's feet! She welcomed and honoured the princes and other guests and offered the customary hospitality of the Ashram. At that time, Sage Gautama also returned and accepted the purified Ahalya. The Devas showered flowers on the happy re-united holy couple. Sri Rama and Lakshmana bowed and went round the couple!

The Ahalya episode illustrates the saying "Every saint has a past and every sinner a future". It also demonstrates that however high, holy and mighty persons may be, the laws of Dharma are very strict and impartial and spare no one in giving appropriate results, if violated!

To err is human but to forgive divine! There is redemption for all sins provided one sincerely repents and seeks forgiveness.

The chanting of powerful and holy Rama Nama (श्रीराम) not only purifies the muddy mind but also helps us to be on the guard and prevents us from unexpected fall in life. Here, Sri Rama, even at that tender age, became the great savior of the fallen पतित पावन रामा.

TALES FROM ODYSSEY

News of Odysseus

By P. Varadarajan

"Well, dear strangers, first finish off eating, then let me know who you are. Your face and appearance clearly indicate that you hail from noble families".

After eating, Telemachus addressed Peisistratus "Look here, dear Peisistratus, how splendid this mansion is! It looks like the very mansion of Zeus, the king of the Gods".

These words were heard by Menelaus too and he addressed them, "Children, no mortal man can have a mansion as beautiful as the mansion of Zeus. After much woe and

Think !

The river is ancient, but the water therein is ever fresh. Hoard, you become old; spend, you are ever fresh.

The water in a river, no matter how old it is, remains fresh because the river flows. Similarly, a person who is dynamic and unselfish, will always have a positive attitude to life. This is the thought for the month.

Based on it, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Balvihar. The last date for sending in entries is July 15th, so send your entry soon. Kindly note that the entrants should not be more than fifteen years old.

The Winner!

The Winner of the thought for the month of March is K. Narendran of Kanpur (10 years). Congratulations, Narendran ! We have sent you "I Love you" and "Tell me a story — Part I" as a prize. Hope you enjoy reading them!

Love and Labour go hand in hand
Where there is Love, Labour becomes a joy

—Swami Chinmayananda.

We often hear people say "it is very boring", whether they are school-going children, teachers, doctors, government employees or as a matter of fact anybody who is engaged in any profession or service. Why? Because there is no devotion to the work and they do not love the work they do.

On the other hand, mothers with new born babes spend sleepless nights, which would make anybody easily irritated but do the mothers get irritated? No. Because they love their labour and are devoted to bring their children up in the proper way.

There was a lady who came to India just as a visitor. During her visits, she found millions living like orphans in poverty. Anyone else in her place would have thought of blaming the government for their condition. But the lady thought that they were also children of God and she was sent accidentally to India to serve them. She forgot her home and started serving the

SAI BABA OF SHIRDI

THE STORY OF HIS LIFE

By Mrinalini V. Sarabhai

Once, a young man who had a reputation as a terrorist, went on a picnic to Shirdi. He did not believe in God nor in any religion. He told his friends "Go and see Sai Baba, I will rest in the hostel. I need to sleep more than to see him". His friends tried to persuade him to go along with them, but he laughed and said, "I don't believe in all this nonsense", so they left him and went to the mosque. The young man bolted the door from inside and went to seleep. Suddenly, the door opened and a man came in. He smiled at the young man and said , "You did not go to see me, so I have come to you. You will have to do much work for me in future, and perhaps undergo hardship also in my name. I am leaving something for you under your pillow". Saying this, he went back through the door. The man who was not sure whether he was dreaming, jumped out of bed and found that the door was locked from inside, "It must have been a dream," he thought, and lay down again. But he could not sleep. The figure had seemed so real. Hesitatingly, he lifted his pillow and there found

a picture of the very man he had just seen. From that day on, he devoted his life to Sai Baba, going through much inner discipline, as guided by him even after his death.

Sai Baba often spoke in language that was symbolic, so it made people think hard before they understood the hidden meaning of each word.

Once, for instance, as a devotee was bowing at his feet, her glasses fell off. Everyone told her that they should be given to Baba as an offering. But at once Baba said, "I do not need glasses. I have a pair and they cost me forty rupees".

Many did not understand what he meant till it was explained to them that he meant he had the real 'sight', the realization of God, and that he had possessed it for forty years.

Even money to him was symbolic. Once a devotee was given a coconut and two annas as dakshina for Baba. He presented Baba with the coconut but forgot all about the two annas.

"Why are you keeping a poor man's two annas?" asked Baba. The man was flustered for he had really forgotten. So Baba smilingly said "Whatever you take up, do it properly and thoroughly; otherwise do not accept any work".

Sometimes he demanded two rupees or four rupees from his devotees.

Then he would explain "It is not two rupees but faith and patience that I want from you." And for the four, he would say "Surrender your manas, buddhi, chitta and ahankara to the lord-your mind, intellect, consciousness and ego. In fact surrender completely to Him."

It was complete surrender to the guru through love and devotion and egolessness that was the path of Sai Baba. The guru is God and it is the guru who gives the grace and the realization.

There was no special ritual, no mantras, nor any of the usual methods. It was just complete surrender, the greatest path of all, for surrender to the guru is surrender to the Divine.

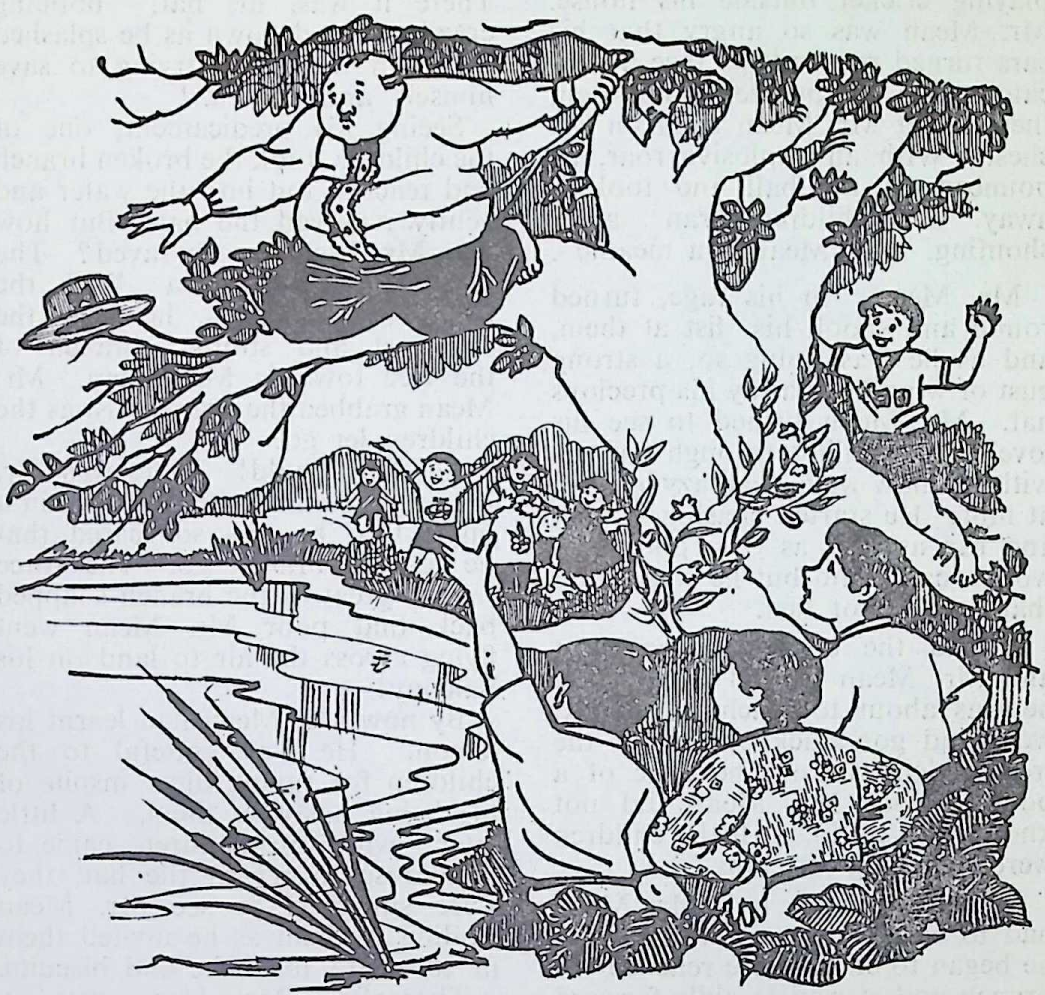
It was on Vijaya Dashmi day that he sent a message saying "the light that Allah lit, he is taking away. I am going. Carry me to the wada. Only Brahmins (spiritual men) will be near me" and he breathed his last. The wada was a stone house built like a temple. Baba himself had directed the building of it in a dream vision. It is in the wada that his shrine is kept today, and the fire that he lit still keeps burning and the sacred ash or 'udhi' is given to all devotees. He has promised 'Whenever and wherever you think of me, I shall be with you", and there is no doubt that thousands have been blessed after his death. His invisible presence is always there and his reassurances are many. "My shrine will bless my devotees and fulfil their needs."

That is why people flock to Shirdi seeking comfort and peace of mind, and more and more become devotees of this great saint of God, who came to the earth to help mankind.

Concluded.

THE PRECIOUS HAT

By Uma Raman



THERE was once a fat old man who was very, very nasty. He never had anything nice to say to anybody. If anybody wished him, he would simply grunt nastily at them. If the children played cricket outside his house, he would take their ball away.

Mr. Mean, the fat, nasty, old man did not have any friends. Nobody liked him and he did not like anybody either. But, there was one little thing that Mr. Mean really loved .....his brand new hat with the pretty little bow on the side.

One day, Mr. Mean decided to

take a walk. It was a windy day, so he put on his jacket and beautiful new hat and went out. As luck would have it, the children were playing cricket outside his house. Mr. Mean was so angry that his ears turned red and his face a delicate shade of purple. Just then, the ball hit Mr. Mean right on the chest. With an explosive roar, he pounced on the ball and took it away. The children ran away shouting, "Mr. Mean is a meanie".

Mr. Mean, in his rage, turned round and shook his fist at them, and as he was doing so, a strong gust of wind blew away his precious hat. Mr. Mean turned to see his lovely hat sailing through the air with the bow waving a crazy bye-bye at him. He started chasing the hat and ran as fast as his poor legs would carry him but he was so fat that he was not fast.

Round the corner the hat went and Mr. Mean behind it. Just as he was about to reach it, the hat went and got stuck on top of the tree, which was on the edge of a pond. Poor Mr. Mean did not know what to do. All the children were laughing at him.

Now, to get the hat, Mr. Mean had to climb the tree. So, slowly, he began to climb. He reached the branch and started to sidle forward on it. But, Mr. Mean had forgotten his weight. There was a loud crack and SPLASH! Mr. Mean fell into the pond, branch, jacket, hat and all!

Poor, poor Mr. Mean. He was so wet. And he was so angry. And his lovely new hat was ruined. What's more, he couldn't swim! There it was, his hat, bobbing crazily up and down as he splashed about in the water trying to save himself and his hat!

Seeing his predicament, one of the children, took the broken branch and reached out into the water and gently removed the hat. But how was Mr. Mean to be saved? The little boy got an idea. With the help of his friends, he bent the strongest and stoutest branch of the tree towards Mr. Mean. Mr. Mean grabbed the branch just as the children let go.

Lo and behold! There was Mr. Mean plucked out of the water in a jiffy. But, he was so scared that he let the branch go. The force was so great as the branch snapped back that poor Mr. Mean went flying across the air to land on his balcony!

By now Mr. Mean had learnt his lesson. He was grateful to the children for saving him inspite of his being nasty to them. A little later, when the children came to his house to return the hat, they were surprised to see Mr. Mean smiling at them as he invited them in to share his cake and biscuits.

Thereafter, Mr. Mean was so good that the children began to like him. He even played cricket with them and returned all the balls. "He's a jolly good fellow", they sang as they danced around him.

Our failures are in fact as much our own as our success —
M/s. Jai Hind Oil Mills
387, Narsi Natha Street, Bombay- 400 009.

THE FOUR FRIENDS

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

Retold by Lalogue Postvala

Little Meena was lonely and unhappy. Her friends had gone for a picnic without her. They were angry with her for she had refused to allow them to play with her new doll.

She looked at her beautiful doll forlornly. Her aunty had brought it for her from the States. But the doll could not talk or play with her. Hugging her sadly, Meena pushed herself in between the roots of her favourite banyan tree and leaned against its comforting trunk.

A large tear trickled down Meena's plump cheek as she thought of her friends having a gay time by the lake. Just then a crow fluttered down from a branch of the banyan tree.

"I'm Kaa. Have you seen a baby deer pass by?" he queried. Meena shook her head.

Hearing Kaa's voice, a rat came out of a nearby hole. "Kaa, I too am looking for Gold Spot. I've not seen him since early morning."

"Nibbler, where could he be? Gold Spot is never late for his lunch.Let's see if he's with our friend, the turtle."

Both of them went towards the lake. Curious Meena followed at a distance with her doll tucked under her arm.

Slow Coach, the turtle, too had not seen Gold Spot. The friends were worried. Though it was long past their lunch time and they were hungry, they were determined to find the deer.

The turtle swam close to the river bank, while Kaa, with Nibbler in his beak, flew just above him.

Finally, they found the baby deer caught in a hunter's net. His soft brown eyes were full of tears. He was overjoyed to see his friends.

"Don't you worry.", said Nibbler and in no time gnawed away at the net. The deer was soon free.

As the four friends were congratulating each other, Meena who was behind a bush, saw an ugly man with a bow and arrows. He had come to fetch the prey caught in his net.

The four friends also saw him. Nibbler quickly crept into a hole. Kaa flew away, Gold Spot scooted into the bushes. Only, poor Slow Coach could not reach the river.

The disappointed hunter caught the turtle by his legs and tied them with a strong string. He then slung him on his shoulder and set off for his home, consoling himself that something is better than nothing.

Nibbler, Gold Spot, and Kaa came out of their hiding as the hunter moved away. They sadly watched Slow Coach dangling by a rope on the hunter's shoulder. They could not leave their friend in the lurch. They decided to save him and quickly chalked out a plan.

Since the hunter had taken the forest path to reach his village, Gold Spot streaked past softly through the bushes. Kaa followed overhead with Nibbler in his beak. And, of course, little Meena with her doll ran behind Gold Spot to find out what they were up to.

When Gold Spot came to the edge of the forest pool close to the forest path, he lay down as if he were dead. Kaa, having dropped Nibbler from his beak, stood near the deer's head, pretending to peck out the eyes.

The approaching hunter saw from a distance what he thought was a dead deer, whose eyes were being pecked out by a crow. He was extremely happy. He shooed off the crow, threw down the turtle and dipped his hand into his bag to take out a stout rope to tie the deer's legs in order to carry him with ease.

No sooner did he throw Slow Coach down, Nibbler came out of the tall grass by the lake and hurriedly bit through the cord tied round the turtle's feet.

Slow Coach then quickly slipped into the pool. Seeing this, the deer jumped up and ran into the forest; Kaa flew into the tree's foliage, and Nibbler hid in the tall grass.

The awe-stricken hunter could not understand what was happening. How could a dead deer skip away, a turtle, his legs tied with a rope, swim away? He was convinced that there was an evil spirit at work in the forest that night. As he ran towards his village, his fearful cries, "A devil is dogging my footsteps. Help me God", reverberated through the forest.

Laughing at this incident, Meena woke up suddenly from her deep slumber at the bottom of the banyan tree. She realised that it was all a Panchatantra story that she had dreamt of. She also understood the need for having good friends and resolved not to be selfish about her doll.

RIDDLES

1. Who plays when he works?
2. What can you hold in your left hand but not in your right?
3. Where do you find oceans without water, towns without men?
4. What tables do we cook and eat?

Answers on Page 25

BIRD PUZZLES

Here are some names of birds with their letters mixed up. Can you sort them out?

1. Yakkrls
2. Glintars
3. Wiki
4. Ccpoake
5. Kwah
6. Lesterk
7. Leoaemh-wrlmy
8. Ampige
9. Drkcliabb
10. Iohscrt

Answers on Page 25

RAMAYANA

SEETA RAMA

By Anantha Narayanan

After purifying Mother Ahalya and receiving the hospitality of Sage Gautama, Sri Rama and party entered the outskirts of Mithila.

Now the poet Valmiki introduces the noble heroine of this great epic, Seeta Devi! We have already seen earlier that the main purpose of Sri Rama Avatara is to practise and establish Dharma. This is demonstrated in the best manner in and through the life of a householder! Naturally, when Lord Vishnu was born as Sri Rama, the son of Dasartha, his consort Lakshmi Devi came down as Seeta Devi to complete the duties of a householder as the beloved wife of Sri Rama.

Sita Devi is very vividly painted in the epic as the devoted, dutiful, pure, noble and illustrious life-partner of Sri Rama. Devi shines throughout the epic as the best example of the ever fragrant flower of Indian womanhood!

The father of such an illustrious heroine to be, would be no ordinary person! King Janaka of Mithila was an ideal and Dharmic ruler like his friend King Dasaratha. But he was more famous for his mastery over the essence of scriptures. He could be counted as one amongst the best of the wise sages.

Once, for performing a Yagna, he was himself ploughing the field for constructing the Yagna-sala (site). In the ancient days, the rulers were

well-versed in and performed the duties of all sections of people, occasionally, to set an example to the people on the dignity of labour!

As the ploughing progressed, King Janaka to his utter amazement found in the furrow a baby girl of golden hue and divine beauty! As he had no children, Janaka eagerly gathered the sweet child with immense joy like a rare treasure! He considered this as a blessing from Mother Earth.

The King presented the child to his wonderstruck queen and since then both of them brought her up as their darling daughter! As she was found in the furrow (सिता-Sita) in the Yagna ground, they named her Seeta. Being the daughter of Janaka she was affectionately called Janaki. She was known to the people as Mythili, the affectionate daughter of the king of Mithila.

Seeta grew up in the luxury of the palace and she was well groomed by her wise and affectionate parents to meet the challenges of life. Like Sri Rama she became very dear to one and all by her talents, beauty and behaviour!

When Seeta reached marriageable age, King Janaka, like all responsible parents, was very much concerned to find a suitable life-partner for his darling daughter! Though he tried hard, he could not find an equal match for his divine Seeta, amongst the many princes who approached him!

As Seeta was of divine origin and proved to be extra-ordinary in all respects, the King decided to part with his treasure, Seeta in marriage only to a valorous prince possessing spiritual power! He felt that such a prince should be tested and chosen. Then Janaka's thoughts flashed to Lord Shiva's bow which was being worshipped in his family. This mighty bow was received from Lord Varuna at the conclusion of a Yagna performed by him in the past.

Being a heavenly bow nobody could even move it and it was adored with reverence in the family. He knew that the sacred bow could be handled only through spiritual power and not physical might. Hence he announced a competition! He made it known to all that he would offer his daughter's hand in marriage only to the prince who could lift, bend and string the mighty bow! This was the Dhanur Yagna —the bow sacrifice.

Attracted by Seeta's charms and fame, several princes tried and failed!

It is for this Yagna that Sage Viswamitra brought the princes, Sri Rama and Lakshmana. Seeing the rare and honoured guest, King Janaka with his Guru Satananda, with delight and reverence, eagerly welcomed Sage Viswamitra and party into the Yagnasala.

To be Continued

Life is a series of continuous and unbroken experiences

With Best Compliments From

Lekha, Seema and Chitra

(Chinmaya Devotees, Cannanore)

bharat darshan

THE KUMBH-MELA OF THE SOUTH

By Dr. R. Vajreswari.

The first of March 1980 was a red-letter day in the temple city of Kumbakonam. All roads led to Kumbakonam; all cars and buses carrying devotees from far and near rushed to Kumbakonam. All the officials from different departments were working on a war-footing for receiving the devotees who were pouring into the city. The residents of the proud city kept their doors open so that they could accommodate their friends and guests. The temples were celebrating festivals. The great Mahamakham tank which is about 16 acres in size had been desilted and given a face-lift. We also join the 20 lakhs of people going to Kumbakonam on this great occasion.

What is this great festival? It is the Kumbh-Mela of the South. I am sure you have heard about the famous Kumbh Mela that takes place in Allahabad once in 12 years. This Maha-Makham is also a deodecennial festival. It is a time honoured event, when devotees have a dip in the sacred waters. At Allahabad, it is the confluence of Ganga, Jamuna and Saraswathi-Triveni Sangam — that attracts lakhs of pilgrims at a particular time. In Kumbakonam, it is the Maha- Makham tank, in which pilgrims have a bath on the auspicious day. The day Jupiter enters Simha rasi in conjunction with the star Makham on the full moon day is the auspicious day. I am sure you know that Jupiter is a planet that takes 12 years to complete its course round the sun. So once in 12 years, it enters Simha rasi.

What is the significance of this great religious festival? There are two interesting and enlightening legendary accounts. One explains the sacredness of the tank and the other the significance of the chosen day.

At the end of every 'Yuga' (a long period of time), there is a deluge when life comes to an end. Brahma, the Creator, puts the seeds of creation in a pot of nectar and seals it. In one such Yuga, the pot floated in the water and stopped at a point. The spot where the pot rested was Kumba - Konam (Kumba - pot, Konam-Corner). Siva appeared as a hunter and hit the pot with an arrow. The nectar flowed from the broken pot and creation began with the released seeds. The nectar emptied itself into the tank and that is the Maha-Makham tank. (Maha-great). Some of the nectar flowed

into Portamarai tank (golden-lotus-tank) nearby. Lord Shiva mixed the drops of nectar in the broken pot with sand and created a Maha-Lingam and identified Himself with it. This deity is "Adhi-Kumbeswara." Even today, no liquid "abhishekam" is performed to the deity.

In course of time, a big temple has been built for Adhi-Kumbeswara. The magnificent Gopuram of the temple is 130 feet high. The Goddess is Mangalambikai, the bestower of everything auspicious.

The Maha-Makham tank has flights of steps on the four sides. Around the tank, there are 16 stone mantaps, each one of them enshrining a Siva linga. The mantap in the north-west corner of the tank is a 16 pillared one and it is called 'Tula-bhara' mantap. Do you know what a Tula-bhara is? It is weighing a person against something precious. It is an ancient custom that has survived till to-day. On the ceiling of this mantap, there is a sculpture depicting a Tula-bhara scene. We learn that a Naik King had performed Tulabhara. In a big balance, the king is seated in one pan of the balance and he is weighed with the heaped gold jewels and silver in the other . This great amount was distributed to learned men, poor people and part of it was used for renovating the Maha-Makham tank. Govinda Dikshitar, the learned Chief Minister of the Naik King undertook extensive programmes for beautifying the tank. The 16 mantaps we see, were built under his direction and patronage. This happened in the middle of the sixteenth century.

Now, let us turn to the other account, regarding the sacredness of the day and the hour. The nine river Goddesses – Ganga, Jamuna, Saraswati, Godavari, Narmada, Sarayu, Kauveri, Kumari and Vegavathi went to Lord Viswanatha at Kasi and prayed for relief from the burden of sins washed off by the human beings bathing in them. The merciful Lord directed them to immerse themselves in the Maha-Makham tank on the auspicious day that occurs once in twelve years.

As directed by the Lord, they bathed in the tank, purified themselves and worshipped Lord Viswanatha who appeared to them on the northern side of the tank. In that spot, a temple has been built, and the deity is Lord Viswanatha. When we go into this temple, we see the beautiful images of the nine river-goddesses. They are worshipped as navakannikas.

Do you realise the significance of bathing in the tank on the 'appointed' day and hour? It is having a dip in the tank, at the time of the confluence of the nine sacred rivers that flow into it as underground currents.

Let us witness the event that took place on Saturday, 1st March. By about 10.30 a. m., about one lakh of people were standing in the knee-deep water of the Maha-Makham tank. The flight of steps, the roads all round were filled with pilgrims. The deities from about ten big temples in the city had been brought to the tank. When the green signal was given, with Vedic chantings, the deities were sprinkled with the

water of the tank and the devotees had a dip in the tank. Water was sprinkled on those who could not reach the tank. That is the hour when the nine river Goddesses had assembled for their own purification. By having a dip at that time, the firm faith is that one has had a bath in all the nine rivers! Lakhs of devotees had their bath earlier than that hour and lakhs poured in after that hour also.

In addition to the religious significance of a holy bath at a holy time, this festival is a strong link of national integration. We learn that even Christians and Muslims joined the Hindu brethren. It is an immemorial event connecting the past with the present. Of course, it will continue in future too! The next Maha-Makham will be in 1992 and some of you, I hope, will plan to come as pilgrims to Kumbakonam!

ANSWERS to BIRD PUZZLES

1.	Skylark	6.	Kestrel
2.	Starling	7.	Yellow-hammer
3.	Kiwi	8.	Magpie
4.	Peacock	9.	Blackbird
5.	Hawk	10.	Ostrich

By K. Geeta (13 years)

ANSWERS to RIDDLES

1. A musician.
2. Your right elbow.
3. On maps.
4. Vegetables.

By Mahesh Hari Prabhu (17 *years*)

TALES FROM ODYSSEY

News of Odysseus

by P. Varadarajan

All these narrations increased the vexation of Telemachus and he addressed Menelaus, saying "What is the use of all this courage? This has not saved him from destruction. Anyhow, it is high time that we all went to bed".

As soon as it was dawn, Menelaus got up from bed, dressed himself up and went to Telemachus and addressed him, "Telemachus, may I know the purpose of your visit to my mansion? Is it a matter of common interest or your own private interest?"

"Menelaus, since the end of the battle at Troy, my father has not returned to our home. In the meantime, a lot of wooers claiming my mother's hand in marriage have gathered in my house. They are destroying my wealth by eating and drinking. Do you know anything about the fate of my father? I have come here only to know about that".

"Telemachus, don't be worried. I am sure that Odysseus will one day come back home and take revenge upon the wooers. If a hind leaves her new born fawn in the lair of a lion and goes out in search of pasture, the lion when it comes back will eat both of them.

Similarly Odysseus will come back home one day and put to death all the wooers. Anyhow as you have asked, I will tell you all I know. I will not hide anything from you".

Proteus—The Sea-God

Then Menelaus began his narration "Upon leaving Troy, I was very desirous of reaching my home as early as possible. But the supreme Gods willed otherwise. They were very angry with me that I did not offer them my sacrifice. I was held up in an island called Pharos. Due to lack of favourable winds, I could not stir out of that island. All our stock of foodstuffs was exhausted.

On that island lives a Sea God. His name is Proteus. He has a daughter Eidothee by name. As I was wandering around the island, she saw me and addressed me "Stranger, you have been marooned in this island for a long time. Are you too inert to find any way of escape from here?"

Then I answered her "You look like a Goddess. It is not by my own wish I stay on here. It is the immortal gods who have punished me like this. However, I would be much obliged if you can show me a way out from this problem."

"On this island lives a Sea God. His name is Proteus. I am his daughter. He is an expert in soothsaying. If you contact him, he can predict your future and show you the way to reach your home. He can also tell you what has become of your kith and kin, while you are thus away from them."

To be Continued

Haryana Has a Bright Future

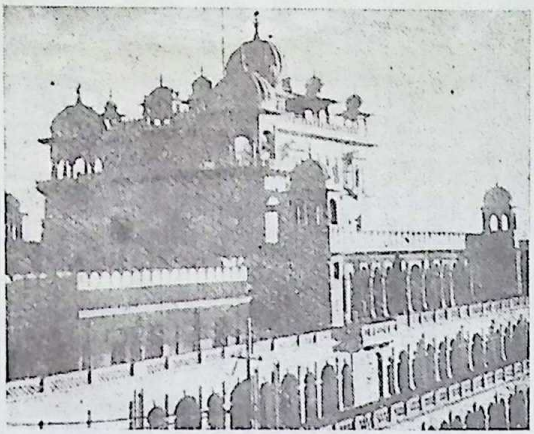
By Shamsuddin

Although Haryana is a small state, with an area of 44,056 square km., it is one of the richest and technologically one of the most advanced states in India. Every village is electrified and two-thirds of them are connected by metalled roads. Three highways pass through Haryana and converge at Delhi.

Haryana came up as an independent state on November 1, 1966. Its boundary extends to the districts of Hissar, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Karnal and Ambala. On its north lies the state of Punjab while the eastern and the western boundaries are touched by Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan respectively. River Ghaggar flows from its north only touching the boundary of the state. The rainfall here is low and the soil is sandy. Mineral resources are chiefly found in the district of Mahendragarh.

Before the reorganisation, the economic development of Haryana was neglected. In 1967–68, it was deficit in foodgrains and now it not only meets its requirements but also contributes foodgrains to the central pool.

Haryana — the verdant land reduced to a desert — is now fast turning green again. Its lesser known places include the Mughal Gardens at Pinjore, the Sun Temple (Surajkund) near Delhi, the sulpher springs at Sohna and a number of



Anandpur Sahib

attractive wayside inns in places of scenic beauty. Badkhal Lake, only 32 km from Delhi, is an ideal place for a quiet week-end and fishing facilities are also available.

From Chandigarh, one can go to Anandpur Sahib which lies at a distance of 53 miles on the way to Bhakra Nangal. It was here that the tenth Sikh Guru, Gobind Singh, created his militant organisation, the "Khalsa." A visit to the historic Gurdwara here will be rewarding.

The standard of living of the people of Haryana has improved. The formation of the state has also brought the people closer together. Now the administration pays great attention to local needs.

The people of Haryana are simple, innocent and straightforward. Most of them are agriculturists. The population consists of mainly Jats, a tribe known for its bravery and chivalry. Others are Ahirs, Rors, Brahmins, Bishnois, Gujjars and Meos. After partition, most of the people migrating from Punjab have settled in Haryana.

To be Continued

A PROBLEM CHILD

by Mrs. Aruna Sheth

When a child is born, he or she is welcomed as a little angel, a bundle of joy, to spread happiness in the family. But soon enough, what happens to the bonds of love — why do they get so tense and threaten to snap? Let us take a few general problems and see if we can identify and possibly rectify some of the shortcomings in our own family set-up.

Every family has its own problems in bringing up children, and most parents tackle them in their own way. Some children have the capacity to overcome their difficulties without outside help.

When does a child then become a problem child? When the parents have a problem in dealing with his undesirable behaviour or anti-social conduct. Children are not created equal. They differ in their capacity to grow physically, mentally and emotionally. Even the rate of growth varies.

Very often therefore conflict arises when we try to 'fit' or judge a child by standard norms or average accepted mould.

The parents' faulty methods of upbringing are often blamed on heredity or environment. A child may behave like his father because he is imitating and heredity has no part in it. Children learn much more by what they see rather than what they hear or are told to do. Like father, like son is often a case of following an example.

"It runs in the family" is a very convenient label to give. If a child throws temper tantrums, the mother may just shrug her shoulders and say "Well, what do you expect? You should see his father when he loses his temper." Thus abnormal behavior is accepted and nothing is done about it. That this problem can be dealt with does not even occur to the parents.

True, certain natural traits may be common in some families but nurturing them is entirely in our hands. Some complexes are the outcome of physical deviation.

The basic needs of a child are comfort, love, security, consistency etc. Any of these can be disturbed by frequent quarrels between parents, inconsistency between parents and grandparents or teachers about rules of discipline and list of do's and don'ts. This may make a child fidgety, nervous, anxious, insecure, diffident etc. or full of hatred, cynical, jealous, defiant, rude, etc.

Nothing gives stability and security to a child as the feeling that he is loved and wanted. All parents love their children. Agreed, but often we love them not for what they are as persons but for what we want them to be.

"Mummy loves you *because* you are so good." This may be an incentive to be good but this is conditional love. A child needs love and security at all times, moreso at times when he is in an adverse situation and has done something wrong.

His parents and his home should be his refuge, dependable and welcoming at all times. Never tell a child "you are a bad boy, because you did ....." but you can always say "Darling, what you did was not good ....." condemn the deed, not the doer.

Also when he does something good, applaud and recognise the worth of his accomplishment.

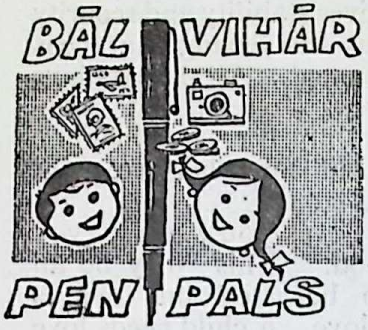
Children need recognition and when they don't get it for doing the right things, they try and get it by wrong deeds. They may think "Mummy only picks me up when I cry" or

"She only listens when I shout and scream ....."

Authority is necessary to discipline at home. But for it to be effective, it must be reasonable, consistent, understanding and just.

Some of the generally seen drawbacks will be taken up individually in the forthcoming issues.

Mrs. Aruna Sheth is a psychiatric social worker, who has been in the field of counselling for the last twenty years. She will be discussing problems arising out of parent — child relationships.



355/80 V. Sampat
(14 years)
20/3, St. John's Road,
Secunderabad – 500 025.

Hobbies : Chess, cricket, collecting coins, stamps and post-cards and reading books, cycling and penfriendship.

356/80 Bhavita Tolia
(12 years)
12, Cambridge Road,

Ulsoor, Bangalore – 560 008.
Hobbies : Reading, badminton, stamps, coins and music.

357/80
Dhanesh Jethanand Khatwani
(13 years)
Shahni Colony, 1st Floor,
Navghar Road, Mulund East,
Bombay – 400 081.

Hobbies : Cricket, reading sport books, solving riddles, cycling, collecting stamps and reading.

Smart Alec

Teacher : "Herman, do you love your country?"
Herman : "Yes".
Teacher : "Would you die for it?"
Herman : (after thinking for a while "No, mine is an undying love."

* * *

"I am responsible for making my father a millionaire."
"Oh," the friend replied, "and what was he before that?"
"A multi-millionaire."

* * *

Servant : "I think it's your phone, sir ....."
"What do you mean 'think'. Don't you know?"
Servant : "Well, he said, "is that you, you old idiot ...?"

* * *

Customer: "Waiter, we ordered pan cakes fifteen minutes back. How long will they be?"
Waiter : "They won't be long at all. They will be round as usual!"

By Ramesh B. Patel
(15 *years*)

* * *

"Uncle", said the little girl, "you are not married, are you?"
"No, dear".
"Then who tells you what you ought not do?".

By Chetan Prasad and
Manjunath A. N.

Perfection is gained in solo flight wherein the traveller is himself his own pilot and guide —
Vijay Corporation
65, Ideal Industrial Estate, Mathuradas Mills Compound
Lower Parel, Bombay - 400 013.

Think !

By an intelligent process of weeding and re-cultivating, we can lay out a garden of fragrant flowers where today we have in us a jungle of thistles and poisonous weeds, infested with reptiles and horrid insects armed with their stings and bites.

By substituting bad thoughts with good ones, we can change our character from a destructive to a constructive one. This is the thought for the month.

Based on it, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Balvihar. The upper age limit for this Contest is 15 years. The last date for sending in entries is August 15th, so send your entry soon.

The Winner!

The Winner of the thought for the month of April is Veena S. V. of Rajapalayam (13 years). Congratulations, Veena! We are sending you "Bal Bhagavatam" as a prize.

As on a grinding stone, people get themselves crushed in the endless competition of the modern material world and its marketplace—

—Swami Chinmayananda.

Some people try to hoard as much money and materials as possible. Due to this, many others go without food and clothing. People hoard money because they want to possess.

There are so many things everybody wants to possess, that they are torn with the thought of which one to grab first.

Confusion prevails everywhere — around us and inside us. We do not seem to realise it. We are not aware of it. Our thoughts consist mainly of desiring material benefits. All this is futile because gathering things can never satisfy us.

People who have a shipload of materials are not satisfied. They are afraid of losing them or they want still more. Even then they do not achieve true satisfaction. In this world, there are very few people who have realised the futility of having material comfort.

It is necessary for all of us to realise this and not crave for worldly objects but to seek Divine Grace and Bliss through devotion.

By Veena S. V. (13 *years*)

It's raining! It's pouring!

By Nilima Kagal (14 *years*)

"How beautiful is the rain,

After the dust and heat, in the fiery street," says H.W.Longfellow in his famous poem. And this is true indeed. Usually the monsoon is preceded by the sultry, scorching summer heat of May. Hence the first showers of the monsoon are truly cooling, refreshing and very welcome. The rains are a blessing to the sick man. They elate the heart of school children, and bring relief to the farmer.

The earth smells very sweet after it has been touched by the first rains. The dry soil thirstily drinks up all the moisture, but after some weeks the monsoon gets a spurt. Then there is incessant rain, especially in Bombay, where "it never rains but simply pours."

Nature takes the rains in its stride and rivers of rainwater are seen gushing and roaring down gutters. Rain in large drops pelts downwards, pattering on windows and roofs. The croaking of toads and water mammals interrupts the rhythmic clattering noise of rain.

The monsoon is like an undecided child — it cannot decide whether to pour or merely drizzle. It always alternates between thunder showers and drizzles.

Children are flushed with glee at the prospect of heavy showers. This is because they get opportunities to float their mini paper boats in water, and when they've done so,

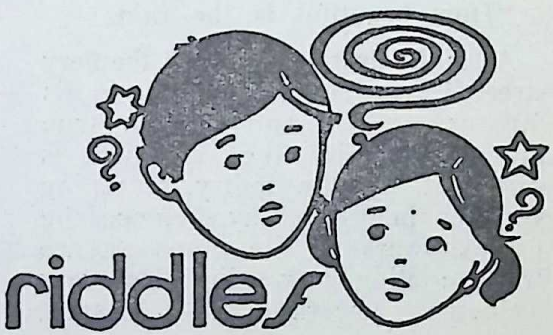
they only stare in mixed wonder, to see the condition of their fleets which are engulfed by the big pools of swirling water. On their way to school, wearing florid raincoats, they happily paddle and splash about the puddles with their gumboots and rainy shoes. Urchins are seen in tattered clothes in the rain, having the time of their life. It is Nature's bath for them.

The charm of the season lasts only for a month or so, for later it makes all of us irritable and peevish. Bus queues elongate and sometimes the lines seem endless. Transport and conveyance are difficult for the layman because some "cabbies" choose to make themselves unavailable right at this time of the year when we need them most. The remaining exploit the unwary citizens who forget to carry umbrellas. Pickpockets and chain snatchers have a gala time and so do sneaky ruffians, who "swipe" windshield wipers and make money. Trains and buses are held up by the score and traffic jams are caused due to water logging. Therefore going to any place by wading through knee deep water, or by motor vehicles which refuse to start, is a major problem. This is the order of the day. Umbrella repairers and sellers have a good time too. Pedestrians feel nervous at the sight of cars.

Extremely heavy downpours with crashes of thunder and flashes of lightning can be dangerous. They can cause floods. This has occurred in several parts of India. The rivers rise in spate, and wash away crops, cattle, and helpless villagers providing news to daily papers. The cruel handiwork of the storm can be seen in many places, what with trees, houses etc. lying in a dilapidated state. If a severe flood occurs, it results in a great financial loss to the country.

Normal rains leave streets and trees washed clean but gutters choked with refuse and give rise to water logging. Throughout the monsoons in Bombay, the weather remains gloomy and one cannot see the sun through the thick black clouds blanketing it from view. Almost always, there is no horizon visible - the sky, the sea and the earth are one.

But it is on a rainy day, and also at the end of the season, when a vibrant full-toned rainbow is visible that poets get inspiration. They create immortal songs on beholding the rainbow and dewdrops glittering like Persian pearls. The season imparts a fresh hue to every part of nature, and refreshes us too.

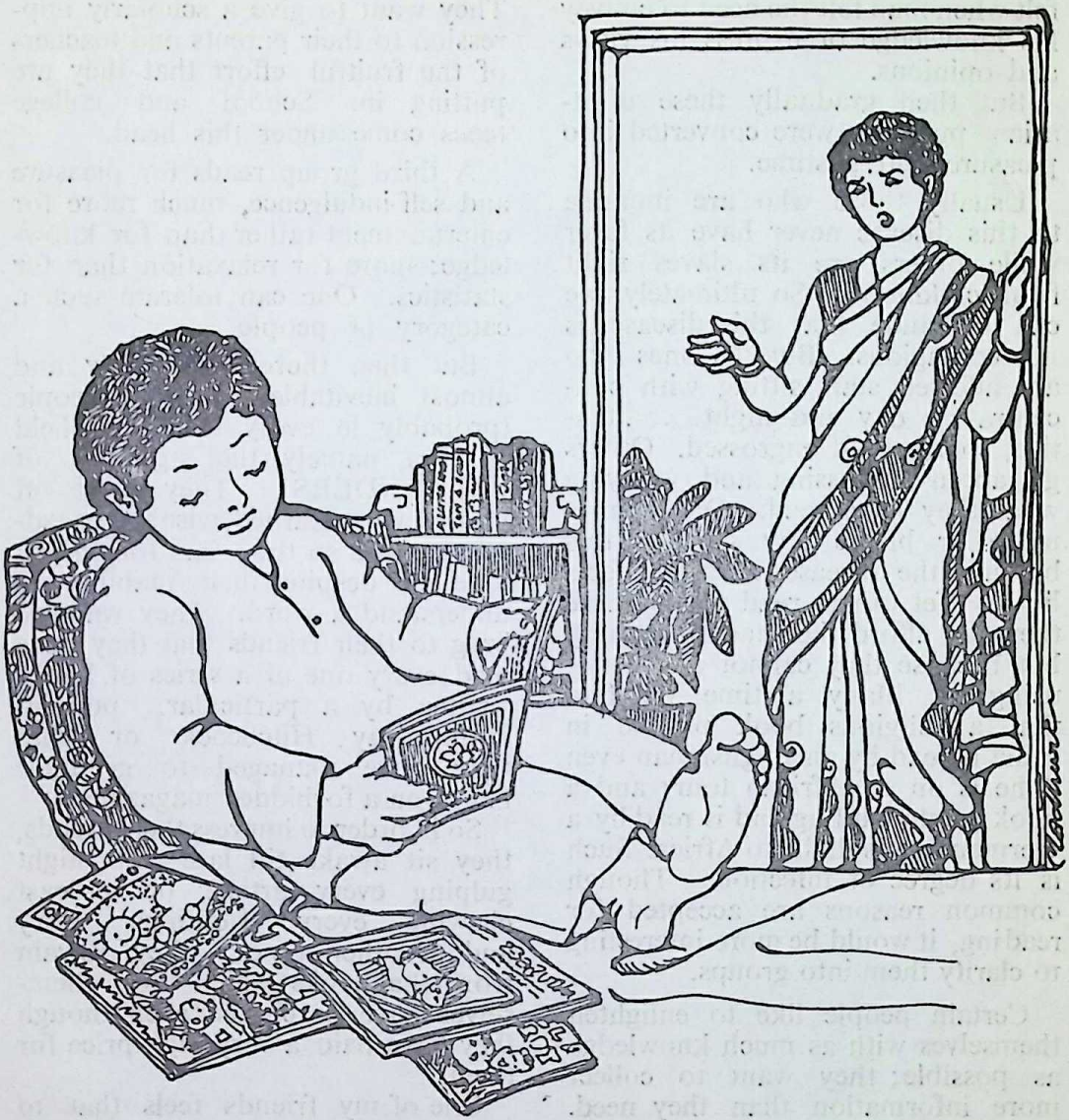


1. What did the Big Maths Book say to the Small Maths book?
2. Why is a boy stronger than ice cream?
3. What did the elephant do when it broke its toe?
4. Why did Jack eat yeast and shoe polish?

Answers on Page 14.

THE CRAZE FOR READING

By Sudhir Baliga (15 *years*)



Reading is the name of a modern mania which has become rampant right from the beginning of the first century, is still spreading now and will undoubtedly spread in the future. The disease—its scientific name is 'Readitis Furiosis' is carried by many germs for example interest in vari-

ous subjects for pastime as well as for knowledge purposes. Prosperity and wealth are also the two factors not to be exempted. Actually the first necessity of scripture was felt when man felt the need to convey his knowledge or express his views and opinions.

But then gradually these utilitarian purposes were converted into pleasure and pastime.

Usually those who are immune to this disease never have its fever while others are its slaves right from childhood. So ultimately, we can conclude that this disease is not contagious. But the ones who are affected start sitting with concentration day and night..... attentive, solemn and engrossed. Others go about discussing and verifying what they have read. One cannot name or blame any sex for this because the disease usually affects both. Yet others read not because they can afford the time and ability but because they cannot afford not using it. Many a time we find that a religious book printed in India is read by an Englishman even if he is on an African tour; and a book printed in England is read by a German on his flight to Africa. Such is its degree of infection. Though common reasons are accepted for reading, it would be more interesting to clarify them into groups.

Certain people like to enlighten themselves with as much knowledge as possible; they want to collect more information than they need. They feel that the book is the final truth; they presume that anything in authorized black print is authentic and perpetual and so they keep on running their eyes non-stop from the left to the right corner of the page.

Some people read because it is compulsory and they are forced. They want to give a scholarly impression to their parents and teachers of the fruitful effort that they are putting in. School and college teens come under this head.

A third group reads for pleasure and self-indulgence, much more for entertainment rather than for knowledge; more for relaxation than for statistics. One can tolerate such a category of people.

But then there is that sly and almost inevitable group of people (probably in every walk and field of life), namely the group of PRETENDERS. They show off that they are learned, wise and broad-minded and so they read for hours together despite their inability to understand a word. They want to brag to their friends that they have read every one of a series of books written by a particular, popular author say Hitchcock or that they have managed to get their hands on a forbidden magazine.

So in order to impress their friends, they sit awake till late at night gulping every article or at least chewing every fictitious story and at other times, they refrain from the books which they themselves have purchased even though they have paid a very high price for them.

One of my friends feels that to have a craze for reading is not at all productive. He *was* a good reader but has now ceased reading probably due to varied controversial

opinions from different authors. I was still confused. He explicated, "A certain book will support a particular idea while another's opinion might unknowingly criticize it. Yet another will only mention an idea but will never comment on it as if it has failed to notice anything striking or vague in it."

"Bernard Shaw might feel that self-education is the best form of education while another orator may praise teachers and professors as the pillars of the country. One author may cherish fiction while, another will castrate the idea as waste of time". So I feel that one should not waste time in analysing another's opinions or convictions. Think and act for yourself. Learn by practical knowledge and past experience. Do things which you feel are good and suitable. Support ideas which *you* feel are convincing and try to collect documentary proof for yourself on any given data or news. You will find the experience thrilling and enriching. It will certainly broaden the mind."

MANI'S MEMORIES

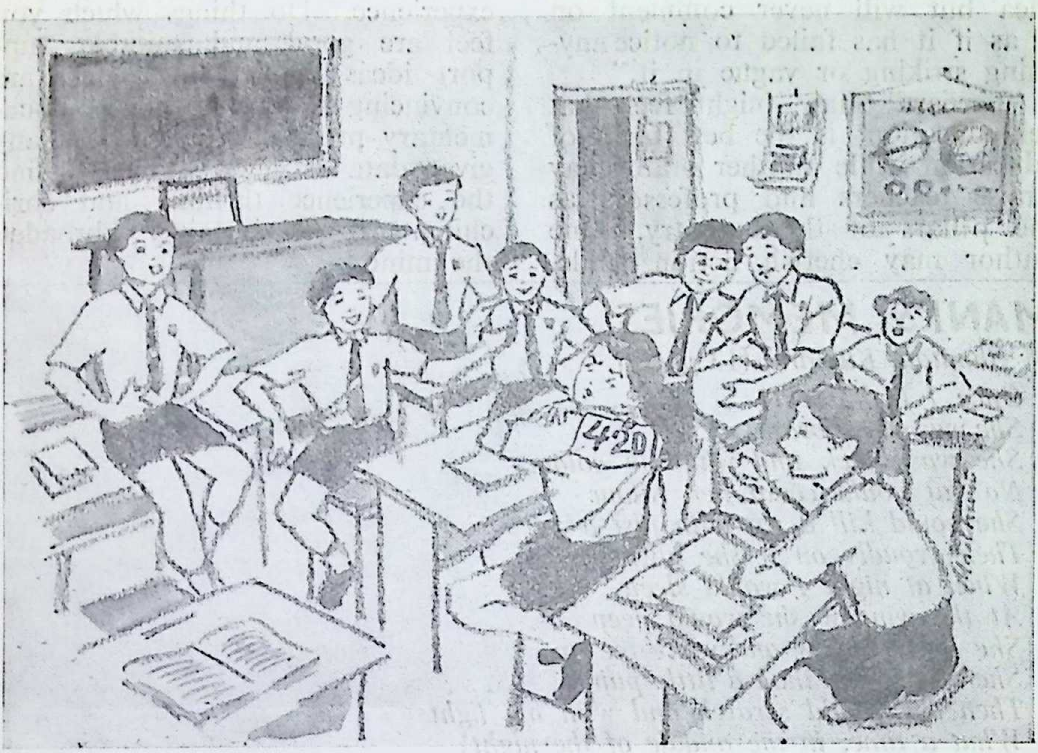
By Shantala Kulkarni (13 *years*)

Once I had a cat—
She was a real brat.
She was black and white in colour
No cat could equal her valour
She could kill a rat with just a pat
Then proudly on it she always sat.
When at night I would sleep
At the window she would peep
She would meow and wake me up
She was worse than a little pup.
Then she would scratch and with me fight
What a time, in the middle of the night!
I would get angry and give her a spanking
She would moan and start lamenting
Then she looked at me with eyes full of sorrow
I would soon forgive her and kisses would follow
One day suddenly she vanished
As though for her mischief from our house banished.
I searched for her in every lane
In every street but all in vain
My heart cried out in grief and pain
I was on the point of becoming insane.
Now I miss her terribly at night
And her mischievous but friendly fight
I long for her amiable look
For whenever I see a cat or one in a book
I see my furry pet in my mind
She, that has left her fond memories behind.

THE COSTLY PRANK

Translated from the Hindi version

By Madhu Choudhury



"420", "420". The class was echoing with these words. Chote looked around wonderingly. As he looked up, there was complete silence. He started studying again.

As soon as he looked down, the words '420, 420' echoed in the class. When he looked up once again, the entire class was quiet. He wondered whether they were teasing him.

He looked at the back of his shirt and found the numbers '420' written behind. As soon as he saw this, he was furious. He stood up and demanded "Who has written this on my shirt?" Nobody was ready to admit having done it.

He said firmly "If you don't own up, I will tell the master." But the boys did not pay any attention. Instead, they made fun of him. Suddenly the master entered. There was pin-drop silence in the class. All the children stood up to wish him.

As the master was walking towards his table, Chote felt somebody pressing his hand. Chote turned around and found Vijay begging

for mercy "please forgive me, don't complain to the master. I was the one who wrote '420' on your shirt. But I did it because all the boys prompted me to do so. Please don't complain to the master."

Vijay knew that the master was a strict disciplinarian. Chote said "O. K, I won't tell him. But meet me outside after class."

Chote knew Vijay had never played such a prank before. After school, he met Vijay under a tree in the compound.

He told him "I have only two pairs of clothes which my sick mother washes. When she washes one, I wear the other to school. Only I know what it costs her to wash these clothes. You have spoilt my clothes. Now what will I do for the rest of the day?"

Vijay was listening intently. Chote continued, "I thought you were a good boy but now I feel that you cannot distinguish between right and wrong."

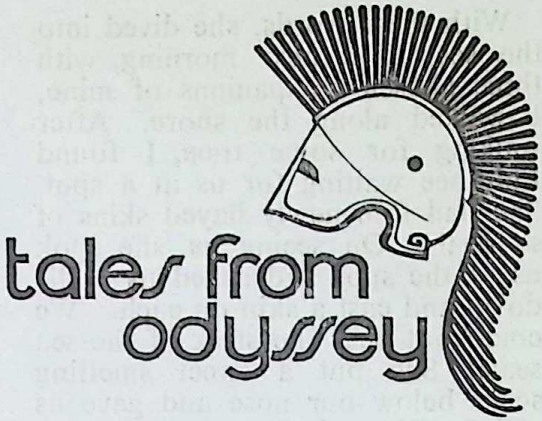
Vijay insisted that he had been naughty because his friends had encouraged him. "I will never do such a thing again," he said.

Chote interrupted, "What difference does it make now? I am not one of those rich boys who change ten times a day. But you have seen only riches, not poverty. I know the meaning of poverty."

"But Chote....."

"Don't interrupt me. As a classmate, I think it is awful to take advantage of anybody's weakness." As he said this, tears came into his eyes. He walked away.

Seeing this, Vijay was touched. He realized the miseries of the poor.



PROTEUS—THE SEA-GOD

By P. Varadarajan

"Kindly tell me also how to contact him because it is not a joke to contact an immortal God."

"You are quite correct. It is rather difficult to catch hold of him. Everyday, exactly at noon, he comes out of the sea to take rest in the hollow cave nearby. Along with him the Seals, daughters of the sea, come. On reaching the cave, he counts the Seals around him and lies down to sleep. The Seals too sleep around him. Choose three of your strongest men and be ready. I will take you all to that place and hide you in the skins of the Seals. When they all lie down to sleep, you should leap forward and catch hold of Proteus firmly. He will try to extricate himself from your grip. He will then change himself into the varied living beings of earth and water. He will even change into fierce fire. With all that, don't let him loose. At last, when he takes his own original form and questions your needs, set him free. Then ask him to show you the way out to return home."

With these words, she dived into the sea. The next morning, with three chosen companions of mine, I walked along the shore. After walking for some time, I found Eidothee waiting for us at a spot. She had four newly flayed skins of sea-seals. On seeing us, she took us to the spot and asked us to lie down and cast a skin on each. We could not bear the stink of the sea seals. She put a sweet smelling scent below our nose and gave us relief. We waited the whole morning.

A little before noon, the Seals came out of the sea in troops and lay down. Exactly at noon, Proteus too came out of the sea. Without knowing of our ambush, he counted us too with the other Seals and lay down to sleep. We then rushed at him and caught hold of him firmly. He changed himself into a lion, a snake, a boar, and so on. But we were steadfast in holding him. At last, he took up his original shape and questioned me "Menelaus, which God helped you in catching hold of me like this? What do you want?"

I answered him "Old man, you are a God and you know all things. Then why do you question me? I have been held up on this island for quite a long time. Kindly let me know which of the immortal Gods afflicts me like this. Tell me also how I can return home."

"You did not give the holy sacrifice to the great Zeus, and the other immortal Gods. All your sufferings are due to this. You cannot dream of returning home unless you go to the river Aegyptus and offer them the sacrifices."

"I will do all as per thy words. Now tell me whether all the other Greeks whom I left at Troy itself reached their homes safely. Did any of them die on their return journey itself or after reaching their homes?"

"Menelaus, why do you want to know all these things? It will be heart rending to you if I tell you."

To be Continued.

ANSWERS to RIDDLES

1. I've got many problems.
2. Because he can'lick' it.
3. It called for a 'toe' (tow) truck.
4. So that he could 'rise' and 'shine' the next day.

By Priya Mehra (11 *years*)

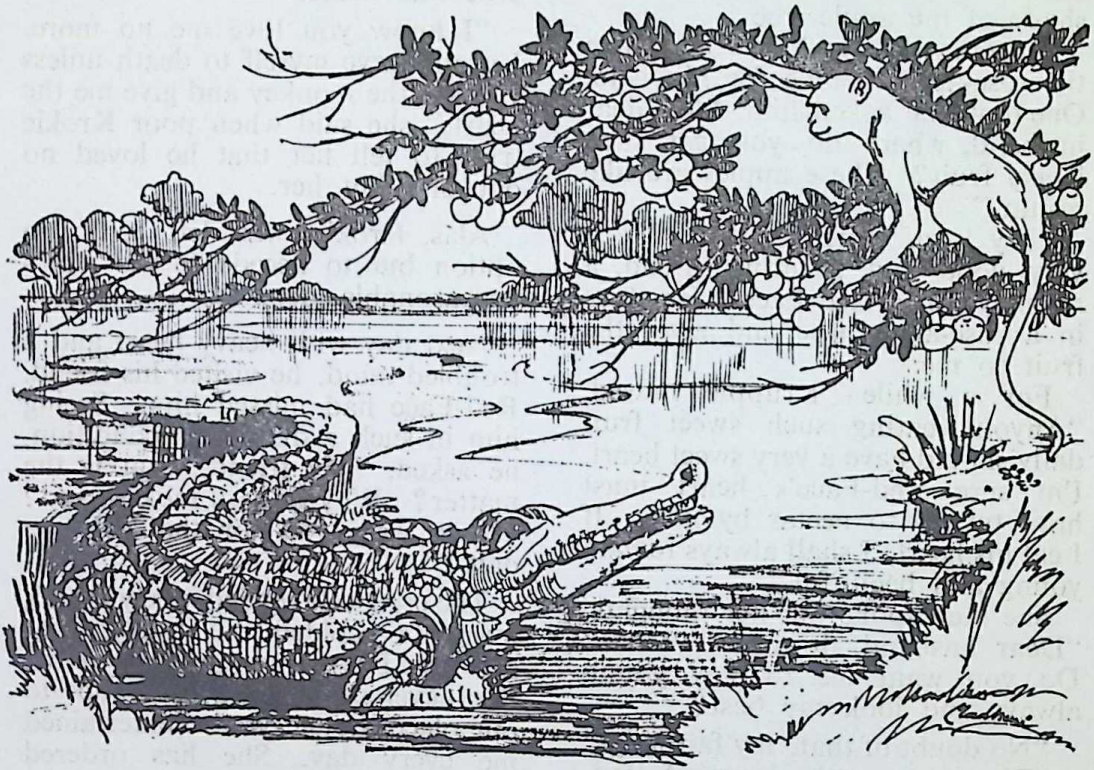
FREE GIFT SUSCRIPTION

Do you have ten friends who would like to subscribe to Bal Vihar ? Then all you have to do is collect Rs. 15/- from each of them and send Rs. 150/- by M. O./Cheque to "Central Chinmaya Mission Trust", Powai Park Drive, Bombay 400 072, with the names and addresses of your friends. They will receive Bal Vihar from the month specified by you for a period of twelve months. AND YOU WILL RECEIVE A FREE GIFT SUBSCRIPTION ! If you are already a subscriber, you will receive Bal Vihar for twelve months after your subscription expires.

The Monkey's Sweet Heart

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

Retold By Lalogue Postvala



Big or small, rich or poor, most of us often make demands on others. Naturally, those who love us, such as our parents, relations and friends, pander to our wishes. But when the claims become unreasonable, we are apt to be disappointed and cause much unhappiness to our dear ones.

Take the case of Kruppie, the crocodile. Her greed was the cause of her husband losing a good friend, who used to give them delicious fruits every day.

Krokie and Kruppie lived on a sandy bank on one side of the river. On the other side in a beautiful rose-apple tree lived a monkey.

The monkey was honest and generous. He practised the traditional art of living. He believed that offerings made to holy men and guests could be used as bridges to heaven. He shared the delicious

rose-apples with all who passed by his tree.

Krokie too used to swim across the river every day and enjoyed the monkey's hospitality. In course of time, they became very good friends. They would eat the tasty fruit and have long pleasant chats under the shade of the apple tree.

Sometimes, Krokie would take the rose-apples home for his wife. One day, she asked him, "My dear husband, where do you get such lovely fruit? These apples are like nectar."

"My love," said Krokie, "I've a very good and generous friend, a monkey called Red Face. He stays in a rose-apple tree and gives the fruit to me."

For a while Kruppie mused, "Anyone eating such sweet fruit daily should have a very sweet heart. I'm sure Red-Face's heart must have turned to nectar by now. If I eat his heart, I shall always remain young and beautiful."

She then spoke out her thoughts, "Dear husband, do you love me? Do you want me to stay young always and look my best?"

"No doubt of that, my fair lady."

"Then get me the heart of Red-Face, the monkey."

Aghast, Krokie cried out, "What are you talking? How can I do this? Firstly, he is my dear friend; secondly, he gives us fruits every day. I cannot kill him."

Kruppie moped around the house the whole day long.

"You've never refused me anything before. I'm sure Red-Face must be a she-monkey. No wonder you go there every day," she moanfully murmured and shed a lot of crocodile tears.

"I know you love me no more. I shall starve myself to death unless you kill the monkey and give me the heart," she said when poor Krokie tried to tell her that he loved no one else but her.

Alas, Krokie was left with no option but to accede to his wife's unreasonable demand.

Next day with heavy heart and a troubled mind, he visited his friend. Red-Face had missed him. Seeing him in such a distraught condition, he asked, "My friend, what is the matter? Why do you look so sad? Where were you for the last two days?"

The crocodile replied, "My friend, my wife scolded me today. She said that I was an ungrateful wretch. I've never invited you even once to our place though you've entertained me every day. She has ordered me to bring you to our place for dinner tonight."

"Your lady is very kind. But how can I come to your home on the other side of the river? I do not know how to swim."

Desire is an expression of incompleteness, and happiness is a state of desirelessness.

M/s. Jai Hind Oil Mills Co.,
387, Narsi Natha Street, Bombay-400 009.

"No problem", quickly replied the crocodile. "Jump on my back and I shall ferry you across the river."

The delighted monkey climbed on to the crocodile's back. As they reached the deep waters in the middle of the river, the monkey was frightened. He told his friend to go slow for if he fell down, he would sink in the water.

The crocodile, slowing his pace, thought there is no escape for the monkey. He is in my power. Why not tell him the truth?,

So he said, "Sir, I've deceived you. I'm taking you to your death. My wife wants your heart. She thinks it is very sweet and if she eats it, she'll always remain young. That's why I've to kill you. Say your last prayer, my man."

The quick-witted monkey said, "If that is the reason for inviting me, you've wasted your time. You should've told me all this on the shore. For then, I would have brought with me another heart, a very sweet one. I keep this hidden in a hole high up in the rose-apple tree. I am sorry your wife will have to eat the heart within me, which is not at all sweet."

When Krokie heard this, he was delighted. "Friend, if I take you back, you'll give me your sweet heart. My wife will stop starving herself and I will not have to kill you."

"Of course, of course."

The crocodile turned back and swam towards the rose-apple tree, while the monkey murmured a hundred prayers to God. As soon as they reached the shore, the monkey jumped off the crocodile's back and climbed high into the tree.

The crocodile pleaded for the heart. The monkey scolded, "You fool, how can anyone have two separate hearts? Go home and tell your wife not to make such unreasonable demands. And never come back under the rose-apple tree."

RAMAYANA

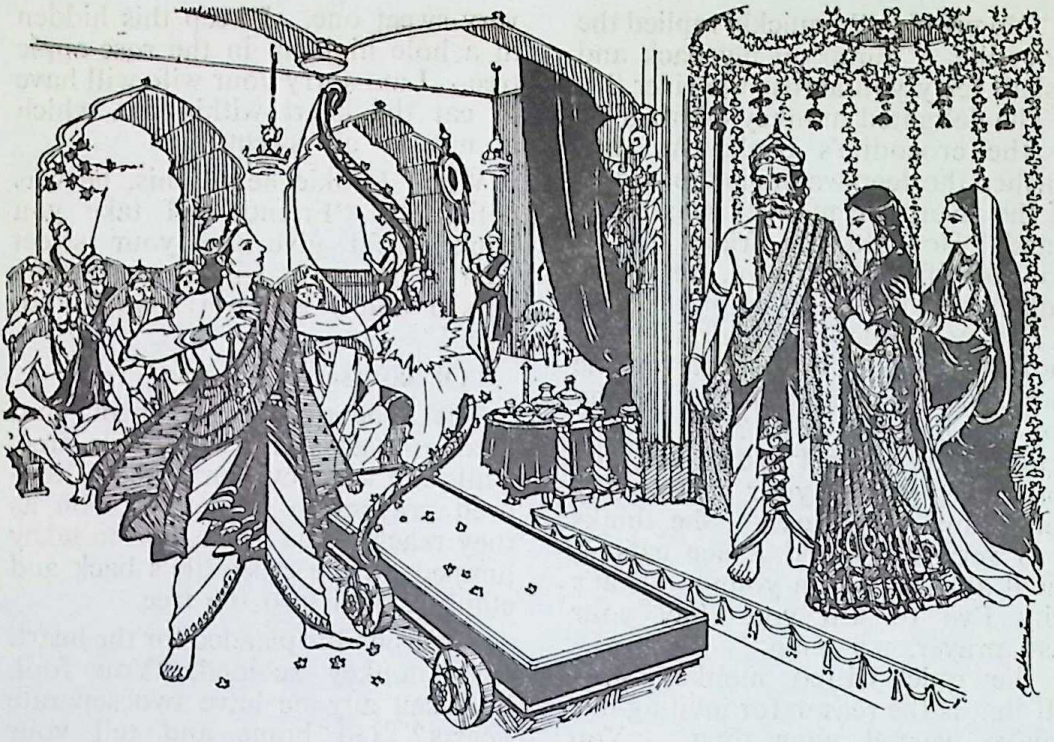
SEETA RAMA

By Anantha Narayanan

King Janaka offered the customary courtesy due to a Brahma Rishi of Viswamitra's eminence.

Immediately, the King's eyes fell on the bright and brilliant princes, accompanying Viswamitra and he could not contain his curiosity! Constantly thinking of an ideal match for Seeta, he enquired of Viswamitra thus : "Who are these divine and radiant youths, similar to each other like brothers and who appear like trained warriors? Who is the blessed and happy father of such illustrious sons?" These are the natural questions, reflecting the mind of an anxious father in search of a bridegroom!

Viswamitra introduced the princes as Rama and Lakshmana, the sons of King Dasaratha. He proudly narrated their heroic achievements



in killing the Rakshasas and protecting his Yagna.

Viswamitra also conveyed to Janaka's Guru Satananda, the son of Sage Gautama and Ahalya, the happy news of the holy re-union of his parents. The happy Satananda in gratitude, narrated to the princes in detail, the glory and achievements of Viswamitra—his transformation from a king to a Brahma Rishi — we have already had an intimate glimpse of this episode when Viswamitra came to Ayodhya to take Sri Rama for the protection of the Yagna. The princes listened with rapt attention and adoration, to the glory of their illustrious Guru!

Sage Viswamitra told Janaka that the youths had come all the way to see the great bow of Shiva in the palace.

King Janaka felt thrilled to hear this as he knew the hidden significance of Viswamitra's statement. He replied that the prince was quite welcome to see the bow and added "If he can string the bow, he will be offered the hand of my daughter, Seeta. Many princes have failed in the past. However, it would be my supreme delight if this prince succeeds and grants me the privilege of offering to him my Seeta's hand in marriage."

At the command of the King, the mighty bow, kept in a box mounted on a carriage with many wheels, was pulled and brought by several strong men! Janaka turned to Viswamitra and said that Sri Rama was welcome to see the bow.

Sage Viswamitra turned to Sri Rama and knowing his spiritual glory, addressed him with intense feelings of parental affection and confidence thus : वत्स राम धनुःपश्य (Hey ! darling Rama! Look at the bow — try your hand!)

Bowing in reverence to his Guru Viswamitra and with the consent of King Janaka, the dignified, yet humble, prince moved towards the box containing the bow. There was a hushed silence ! All eyes in the huge gathering, of the learned and the mighty assembled in the Yagnasala, were set on every move of the radiant Sri Rama!

Sri Rama opened the box slowly and lifted the bow with ease like a baby elephant handling a full sugar-cane! Holding one end of the bow towards his powerful toe, Sri Rama swiftly bent and strung it at the other end. When, in a flash, Rama drew the string back with a tremendous force, the entire assembly was shocked to hear a thunderous explosion! Next moment, they were all wonderstruck to see the most unimaginable feat performed by the valiant prince Sri Rama! The mighty bow had broken in the middle in two parts!!! Flowers rained from the heavens along with the loud and joyous claps of admiration from the assembly: "Jai Ram! Jai Ram! Jai Jai Ram!" The overjoyed King Janaka uttered in amazement :

"My darling daughter Seeta shall be offered to this mighty prince and she will indeed bring fame and glory to the Janaka family!"

Viswamitra asked Janaka to convey immediately the happy news to King Dasaratha in Ayodhya through messengers and extend a Royal invitation to the marriage.

Accordingly, the glorious achievements of Sri Rama and the news of the proposal of marriage was conveyed to King Dasaratha, who was immersed in boundless joy! His thoughts went back to the day in his palace when Sage Viswamitra arrived to take Sri Rama while he was considering the marriage of his son! He felt extremely filled with gratitude to the sage that his wish was fulfilled in such a glorious manner!!

King Dasaratha and the Royal bride-groom's party from Ayodhya arrived in Mithila in state and were ceremoniously received with traditional honours by King Janaka. Elaborate arrangements had already been made to conduct the divine wedding with pomp and splendour.

King Janaka's darling Seeta was fully dressed and adorned with gems and jewellery, which shone due to the natural golden lustre of Seeta!! Chanting of Mantras and divine music filled the air.

On the auspicious day fixed by the Royal astrologers and at the appropriate time (Muhurta), Janaka, along with his Queen, took Seeta to the altar by her hand, and affectionately placed her opposite Sri Rama. While placing Seeta's hand in Sri Rama's hand! he said to Rama the following significant words and poured the sacred water on the united hands:

इयं सीता मम सुता सहधर्मचरी तव ।
प्रतीच्छ चैनां भद्रं ते पाणिं गृह्णीष्व पाणिना ।
पतिव्रता महाभागा छायेवा अनुगता सदा ।।

"Here is my daughter, Seeta, who will ever be your able partner in the pursuit of Dharma. Please look at her and hold her hand ! She is highly fortunate ! With devotion and dedication, she will follow you for ever like your own shadow.".

The charming and valiant prince, Sri Rama, accepted the loving hand of the adorable Seeta, in holy wedlock in an atmosphere of joyous ecstasy to become the eternal SEETA RAMA!!! Flowers rained from heaven. May the divine couple dwell in our hearts and bless us to walk the path of Dharma!!

To be Continued.

CRICKET QUIZ

By G. Srinivas (14 *years*)

1. The striker moves out of his crease and misses the ball. The ball hits the wicket -keeper's pads and re-bounds to break the striker's wickets, when he is still out of his crease. The striker is not running but trying to regain his crease. Is the striker out?
2. A ball is hit straight by the striker. After touching the non-striker's person, who is backing up, the ball is deflected and breaks the bowler's end wicket, with the non-striker out of his crease. Can the non-striker be given "run out?"
3. With the batsman out of his crease, a player fields the ball. Holding the ball in one hand, he breaks down the wicket with the other hand. Can the batsman be given "run out?"
4. Can a batsman be awarded runs from a ball that has struck twice?
5. Can a batsman be given out, caught if the ball which hit an umpire got deflected to be caught by the fields man before it touches the ground?
6. A valid appeal is made for I. B. W. against a batsman. But immediately after hitting the pad, the ball hits the wicket. How is the batsman out?
7. Can a batsman who is feeling giddy, retire even if the captain of the fielding side refuses to give permission to retire?
8. A bowler sees the non-striker moving out of his crease, before the ball is bowled Can he run him out without any warning?
9. While playing at the ball, a portion of the striker's bat comes off and hits the wicket, completely removing one bail. Is the striker out?
10. The striker plays the ball just in front of his wicket and starts for a run. Seeing one of the fielders rushing to the ball, he tries to regain his crease and in doing so he accidentally kicks the ball on to his stumps. The bails fall down with the striker out of his crease. Is he out?

Look out for the answers in the August issue !

Haryana Has a Bright Future

By Shamsuddin

They started business and opened small shops. Now a large number of them are big traders, merchants and bankers.

The Jats of Haryana are very hard working. Most of them are brave soldiers and have won laurels in the last two World Wars. During the Chinese aggression and Pakistani attack, they came forward to defend the country. The womenfolk are equally brave and hardworking and join hands with their husbands in agricultural work. The Jats are said to be very brave, enduring and loyal people. They follow the principle of 'do or die' when engaged in operations, be it on the field or in the farm. They are also fond of jokes filled with wit and wisdom.

Among the other communities, there are Ahirs who mostly occupy the areas of Rewari and Jhajjar. They are mostly engaged in dairy farming and cultivation work. The Rors and the Brahmins too are agriculturists but not so hard-working as Jats and Ahirs. The Gujjars are mainly cattle breeders and are mostly settled in Gurgaon, Karnal and Rohtak. The Meos, a Mohammedan tribe is mostly found in Gurgaon district.

Haryana, though a small state, has a bright future. Having milch and drought cattle, it has great potentialities to develop the dairy industry. There is also much scope for commercial tanneries in Haryana. The development of the sugar industry and paper mills is of great advantage to the state. Agricultural products have increased due to the irrigation projects undertaken by the Government of Haryana.

The Government is trying to provide piped drinking water and metalled roads to link every village. Various schemes have been initiated for the benefit of scheduled castes and backward classes. They receive educational stipends, loans for the purchase of agricultural implements and construction of houses as well. The Government has also offered incentives to industrialists for settling in Haryana.

The family life of the people of Haryana is a tale of happiness. The housewife rises early in the morning, finishes her household work before the day breaks, cooks food and carries it to the farm for her husband. The men-folk in Haryana are not orthodox and seldom observe religious formalities. On the other hand women are more particular and are often found engaged in worship and prayers.

The women of Haryana are very active and smart. Even after working hard for the whole day, they are seldom tired. Morning and

Everybody exists. It is only the few who live,
because to live you should have an ideal—
Chinmaya Family, Kuwait.

evening, they can be seen assembling at a nearby well, chatting and joking with each other. Clad in coloured clothes, and heavily loaded with silver ornaments, they present a fine scene near village wells.

Among the Jats, the married women observe 'purdah' while the unmarried ones move about with uncovered faces. The married women also wear an armful of glass bangles along with heavy ornaments, mostly of silver. After the death of their husbands, they break off the glass bangles. If a Jat woman becomes a widow at a young age, she is generally accepted as a wife by any one of the brothers of her late husband. A Jat woman puts on a 'ghagra', a 'kurta', and an 'odhani' (a cloth to cover head and body).

The men wear loin-cloth and vest, a chadar and turban. On festivals, they also wear some ornaments in their ears and necks. In brief, the people of Haryana are well-known for their simplicity of life, gay manner and gentleness of behaviour.

Concluded.

MOTHER'S CORNER CONTEST

Do you have anything to say about your mother / child ? We invite mothers / children to send us interesting experiences in not more than 450 words. The best will be given a 'surprise gift' and will be published in Bal Vihar !

Bal Vihar Children's Fair

The Balvihar Children's Fair held on 1st June 1980 at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Powai was the first one of its kind organised by the magazine to increase its subscriptions during the Prachar year. Over 700 children and 450 adults participated in it.

Swami Harinamananda inaugurated the fair at 2.15 p. m. after a prayer by lighting a lamp outside Saraswati Nilayam (where the exhibition was held). The exhibits ranged from paintings, collages, and handicrafts to stamps and coin collections from children between the age of 5 to 15 years. There was quite a display of young talent!

Children had a wonderful time especially at the eats and games stalls. Kwality icecreams, Nutramul (milk), Parle biscuits and Ravalgaon sweets (which were donated) were distributed free to the children. The games stalls were packed with eager children attempting to knock down nine pins, tailing the elephant etc. At 4 p. m. tiny tots from Uttam Bala Vihar, Chembur staged an amusing skit "Akbar & Birbal" from the timeless pages of Mughal history. As Swami Chinmayanandaji had to leave early, he could not speak to the children. However, he appreciated the exhibits made by them.

Maya Malani, the Editor of Bal Vihar welcomed the gathering and thanked the volunteers.

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CONTEMPLATION FOR MOTHERS ON COMMUNICATION

By Lalita Frazier

"Those who consider Him to be far away in Heaven keep away from Him, but those who realize the meaning of the teaching in the Bible that 'we live and move and have our being in God' feel Him at all times by their side."

—Pir Inayat Khan

We have been thinking about the nurturing power of giving pure attention to the child; that is, just allowing the child to express, to simply be, while the mother watches on approvingly. Out of this effortless appreciation of another, whether child or adult, naturally flows a sense of well-being that is the essential ground for communication. Enquiring into the nature of communication and discovering ways to more effectively communicate is the contemplation we're continuing here.

There's a reason why the thoughts about communication follow right after thoughts about attention. Attention is the pre-requisite for the giving and receiving of information; we really do have to "pay attention" in order to enter the realm where messages are made known and shared. Literally, the word 'communicate' means 'to make common'. What we share when we communicate with another is not a tangible thing of the material world, (just as the word is not the thing it signifies), nor is it solely, ideas that are being transmitted in the world of thought, (our ideas can be misunderstood and thus not received). But what we can and do share (and this is especially true in communicating with children) is an attitude.

Because in communicating with anyone, what is conveyed (in words or in gestures, or in touch) is always something **more** than the information content of the message ..... we are communicating an attitude about ourselves or about the person being spoken to, or it can combine into an attitude about life in general. (This is why a smile can say so much, or convey an opposite message depending upon the attitude in which it is given). And this attitude is based upon our assumptions. So if we want to know more about communicating with children, let's find out our basic **assumptions** about children.

To be Continued.

You criticise others. Are you without blemish?

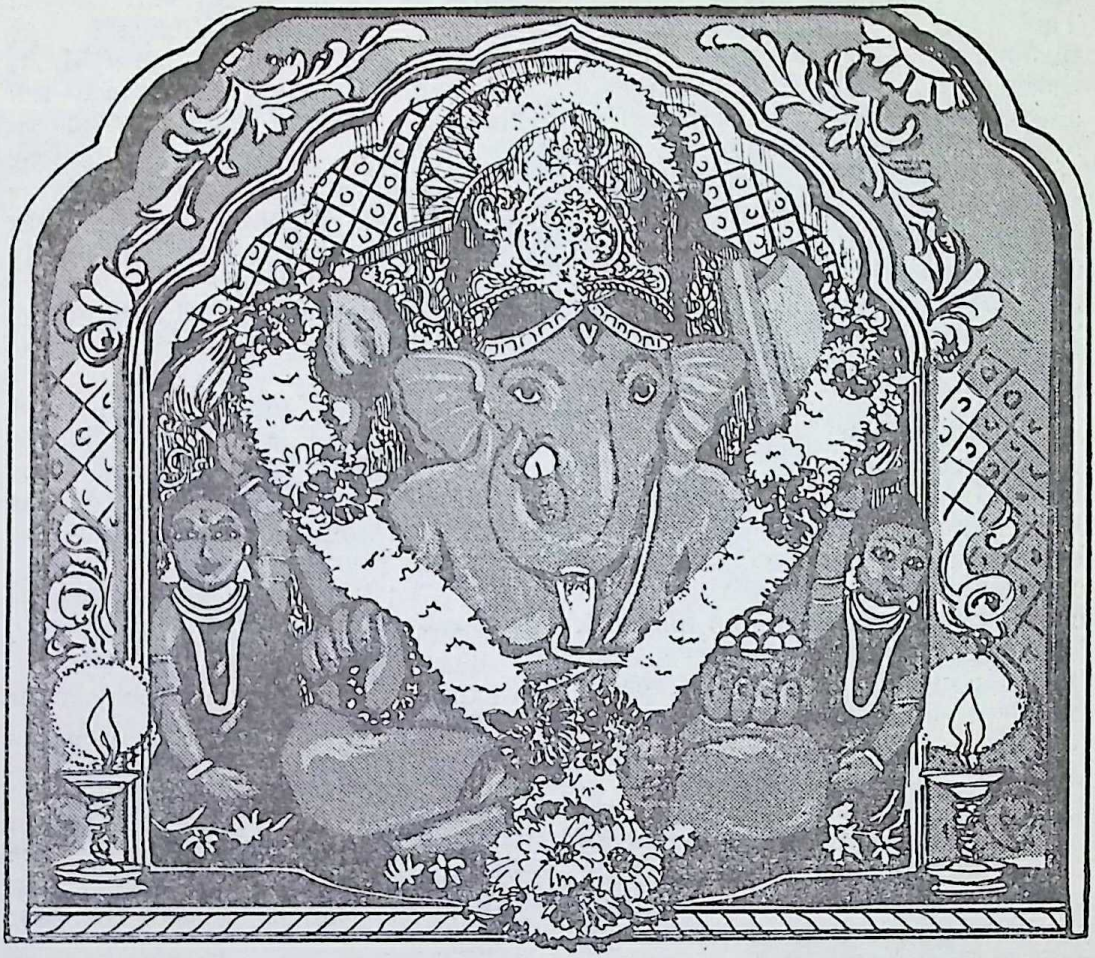
Vijay Corporation

65, Ideal Industrial Estate, Mathuradas Mills Compound
Lower Parel, Bombay - 400 013.

SIDDHI VINAYAK

A HEAVEN OF PEACE

By Parimala Inamdar, Nilima Kagal and Usha Rao (14 *years*)



If you happen to be on the Veer Savarkar Marg (in Prabhadevi) on a Tuesday, you can't fail to notice the serpentine queues that extend on both sides of an insignificant blue single storey building. Distance is no bar. Devotees come from as far away as Chembur, Thane, Dombivli, and even Titvala (where there is another Ganesh temple). Neither the blazing sun nor the torrential rain prevent the devout crowds from completing their weekly pilgrimage. The building, as you must have guessed, is the Siddhi Vinayak temple. It stands apart, a heaven of peace, indifferent to the hustle and bustle

of vehicular traffic that whizzes past on the busy main road on which it stands.

Vinayak is another name for the popular Elephant God, Ganesh. The word, Siddhi means "accomplishment or fulfilment." Whether the wish is as simple as scaling the slippery examination walls or getting a good husband or wife, Lord Ganesh is believed to be ever obliging. Mr. S. B. Patker feels that it is due to his profound faith in Ganesha that he has been blessed with good health, even at the age of sixty five. "If I do not go to the temple, I will fall sick", he states categorically. He has been a staunch believer and worshipper for the last twenty years.

Although legend proclaims that Lord Ganesh had two wives called Riddhi and Siddhi, some devotees believe that he was a pure brahmachari like Hanuman. Yet others claim that his consort was Sharada. The enigma that Ganapati is, makes him a complex deity whose reality no one knows, yet everyone adores.

It is not only men who come to worship him but women too. Ganesh is believed to be the ideal match maker and there are many who pray to him for a successful marriage.

Most of his devotees are Maharashtrians, South Indians and Gujaratis. They start with five or eleven visits as a token of gratitude for the fulfilment of a desire. As their faith develops, they continue to visit the temple.

Ganesh is worshipped as 'Vignaharta' or 'the remover of obstacles.' He is also believed to be the destroyer of evil. For these reasons, all sacred ceremonies are begun with invoking his name. "He gives us the courage to face the daily difficulties," claims Mrs. Wagh. Most of the devotees don't believe in miracles. However many have heard of the miracles of Siddhi Vinayak. For example, one boy studying for M. A. constantly failed till he came to the temple. After that, he got a first class.

According to legend, the deity is supposed to be 'swayambhu' or self-effulgent. People believe that it emerged from the ground nearly a hundred years ago. The temple was only a mass of ruins with the deity ensconsed among them. It fulfilled wishes. A handful of 'Kohli' fisher-folk built it and managed it. Even today, it is not at all opulent. Nevertheless, since 1947, this middle class temple has been drawing the crowds, the rich and the poor alike.

What is it that attracts thousands of worshippers from all walks of life?

There are those who, though cradled in the lap of luzury, seek shelter and solace here after being driven from pillar to post in search of an inner power to cling to. But even the poorest of the poor seek refuge at this temple. It gives them peace of mind. Many labourers spend the night near it to seek the first 'darshan'.

At 5 a. m., the two main doors open to welcome the early morning risers. The steady stream of devotees continues long past midnight. The centre of attraction is the beautiful saffron idol of Ganesh, which is lit by the first 'aarti'. The deity accepts graciously the humble offerings of coconuts and flowers or even mere prayers offered with a

pure heart. On either side of the idol are the sweating pujaris who are hard put to cope with the spate of offerings made by the swelling crowds within the cramped walls.

The temple is an animate emblem of devotion although it is made of crude stone and cement. It has a small yet pious dome and a cream-coloured pillar which is adorned with lamps during festivals, reflecting the glory of the much-loved Vinayaka. Beautiful pictures of Ganapati, Sai Baba and Hanuman decorate the walls.

Beyond the main shrine is a smaller one of Hanuman (or Maruti), around which people take "pradakshina" or the three sacred rounds chanting his name. The 'regulars' also worship the pipal tree in the back yard which is supposed to be an abode of the Trinity according to the Puranas. Datta is the consolidated form of the Trinity — Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh.

After feeding the cows that linger in the temple precincts, and collecting the 'teerth' and coconut, the worshippers return home, satisfied that they have paid their homage to the Gods.

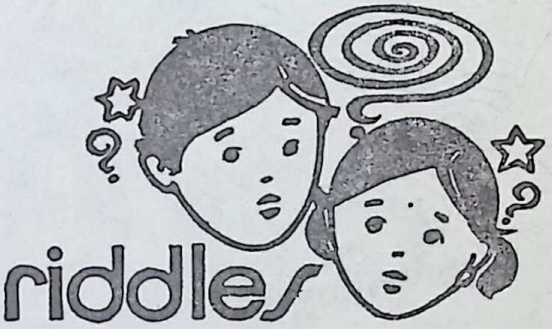
Though different days are dedicated to different Gods (Saturday to Hanuman, Thursday to Dattatreya and Tuesday to Ganesh), the maximum crowd comes on Tuesdays. On other days, the temple is virtually deserted.

The Tuesday 'darshan' is considered so sacred that worshippers wait patiently rather than return without it. A couple of hours are especially set aside for this visit. The housewives, tied down by household chores in the morning, come in the afternoons and evenings. The men and working women come before or after work. Shankar Shetty, a law student, gets up at 4.00 a. m. to make it to the temple before going to work.

The mile-long queues (separate for men and women), testify to the fact that here are many like him. Although the men's queues appear longer, Sulabha, one of the flower sellers, claims that during the day, an equal number of men and women visit the temple.

There are many who thrive on the strength of such devotion. These include not only the coconut and flower sellers and the sweetmeat vendors but also the people who look after the slippers and the beggars.

Lord Ganesh offers sustenance to all those who have faith in him. Each year, the increasing number of visitors to this temple prove that the powerful and benevolent Elephant God Ganesha has a strong magnetic pull.



1. Why are tall people lazier than short people ?
2. Why did the schoolboy throw a clock out of the window ?
3. What is the noisiest of all games ?

Answers on Page No. 11

THE RAJA'S GARDEN

By Ritu Vashistha (12 *years*)

Once there were two parrots named Mithu and Mithi. They lived very happily, flying from garden to garden to eat fruits.

One day, Mithu and Mithi found a beautiful garden with high walls all around it. They flew in. They saw trees full of guavas and grapes, pears and apples and bananas. The garden had all the lovely things that parrots love to eat. They were the happiest parrots in the whole world. They flew from tree to tree, eating wildly. Then suddenly "BANG" went a gun. The noise sent Mithu and Mithi into the sky, "WHOOSH". They didn't stop till they got home. They shivered with fright. They now knew that the garden they had found was the Raja's Garden.

Every parrot knew about it and was warned about it. No parrot ever went near it, for the Raja was a wicked man. HE ATE PARROTS. The next day, Mithu dressed up early in the morning. Mithi was afraid that he might go to the Raja's garden again. She said,

"Mithu dear, I do fear
The Raja's out to beat you.
It makes me sad
The man is bad
And he is going to eat you".

Mithu took another look at himself in the mirror. He said,

"Mithi love, don't fret, don't cry,
I'm alive and hearty.
When I fly home by and by
We'll have a jolly party".

And away he flew, straight to the Raja's garden. This time, he took care that he wasn't seen. He ate some fruits from every tree and he took some for Mithi. When he got home, he found her sitting in a pool of tears. Even though Mithi was unhappy, Mithu set off for the Raja's garden every morning.

Mithu became fat. He also became careless. He stayed longer and longer in the Raja's garden. One day he went to sleep in the sun. The Raja's man crept up softly and CAUGHT HIM.

"Parrot, you've eaten so much of the Raja's fruit. You'll make a nice birthday dinner for him tonight", he said. The Raja's mouth watered when he saw Mithu. He said,

"This parrot's so fat
Shall I grill him ?
He's as b g as my hat.
Shall I stew him ?
Shall I bake him or fry him
Shall I roast him, or try him
AS HE IS — WHOLE ?
Without a knife or bowl ?
In a gulp
ULP !
He's stuck
Like a duck
In my chest.
I need a rest,
He's slipping down
Like a clown
Down, down, down
What luck
He's in my STOMACH !"

That night, Mithi waited for Mithu. She waited and waited. When she couldn't wait any longer, she flew to the Raja's garden. In the dark, she called out, "Mithu ! Mithu !" But only the owls called back, "Tuwhit-tu-whoo". Mithi was a very brave parrot. "I will find Mithu. I won't go home without him", she said to herself. She flew to the Raja's palace. She flew from room to room, calling softly,

"Mithu dear, I do fear
The Raja has beaten you
It makes me sad
The man is bad
Has he already eaten you ?"

When she reached the Raja's room, Mithi saw the Raja asleep. Then from his stomach, she heard Mithu singing,

"Mithi love, don't fret, don't cry,
I'm alive and hearty.
When I fly home by and by
We'll have a jolly party".

She flew up closer. In the dark her wing tickled the Raja's nose. The Raja opened his mouth and sneezed : "ATISHOO !!"

Out of his open mouth flew Mithu. Out of the window, out of the garden, out into the wide beautiful world flew Mithu and Mithi. The Raja was left with an empty tummy. To see his face was really funny.

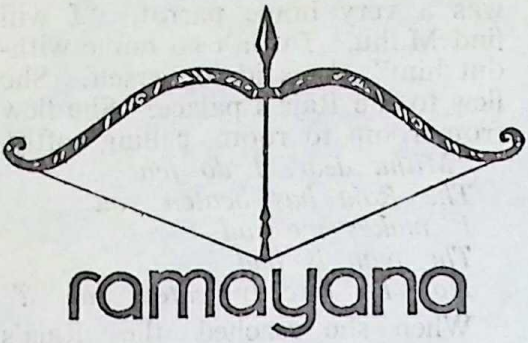
ANSWERS TO RIDDLES

1. Because they're longer in bed.
2. To see time fly.
3. Tennis, because you can't play it without raising a racket.

By Sudhir Kumar

Religion shows us the path to a healthier and more intelligent living, but determination alone can help us to achieve it.

Chinmaya Family, Kuwait



KING DASARATHA'S FATEFUL DECISION

By Anantha Narayanan

All the four princes, who were jewels among men, were equally dear to King Dasaratha. However Sri Rama outshone all of them and proved to be dearer than his own life to the king.

After their triumphant return to Ayodhya, one day the two inseparable brothers Bharata and Shatrugna were taken by Bharata's Uncle, Prince Yudhajit, to Kekaya, his grandfather's place for a long stay.

Sri Rama and Lakshmana, in utter obedience to their father, dutifully served him in all respects. Besides, Rama affectionately looked to the needs of his three mothers personally and also attended to the business of his elders as well. All sections of the people of Ayodhya were enchanted with the disposition and conduct of Sri Rama, who shone like a brilliant star by his manifold virtues.

The divine and affectionate couple, Sri Rama and Seeta Devi, lived very happily in Ayodhya for twelve years.

Seeta was very dear to Sri Rama because of her beauty, virtues and as a life partner acquired by Sri Rama with his father's blessings. The handsome and virtuous Sri Rama was equally rooted in Seeta's heart. They were made for each other and served by their life and behaviour as models for the people of Ayodhya.

The Epic Ramayana is made up of seven sections called Kandas. The broad division indicates in stages the movement of the story and the various happenings in Ayodhya and elsewhere. Bala Kanda, which depicted the birth, childhood, training and marriage of Sri Rama and his brothers ends here. Now we enter into the Ayodhya Kanda, the section detailing the fast-moving and eventful episodes affecting the entire population of Ayodhya, which marks the turning point in the Epic. Everybody in the Kanda will be on the move, and as if to indicate this, the Kanda starts with the following stanza with the word गच्छता — "proceeding".

गच्छता मातुलकुलं भरतेन तदानघः ।
शत्रुघ्नो नित्य शत्रुघ्नो नीतः प्रीतिपुरस्कृतः ॥

(The sinless Shatrugna, the destroyer of lasting enemies, was taken away on that occasion by Bharata while the latter was proceeding to his maternal uncle's home, full of affection as Shatrugna was for Bharata).

SRI RAMA GUNAVALI

Throughout the Epic, the great divine, yet human qualities of Sri Rama are depicted. In the opening of this Kanda, the poet colourfully paints the qualities of head and heart of Seeta and Rama, which alone serve as strength, solace and support for the divine couple in facing the unexpected challenges of life that lay ahead !

Sri Rama possessed a captivating personality. This was equally well-matched by his emotional beauty, intellectual attainments and spiritual fervour — a very rare combination indeed ! He excelled his father, King Dasaratha in virtues.

Sri Rama was tranquil of mind and spoke softly (मृदुभाषी) and sweetly (मधुरभाषी) at all times ! Though he was a great prince, he was informal and himself spoke first to everyone, (पूर्वभाषी) which showed his love to the people. Even if anybody spoke harshly, he did not retort ! Nor did he find fault with anyone !!

Sri Rama's great quality is his deep sense of gratitude (कृतज्ञता) which is reflected in very many instances in the Epic. Even a small good turn done by anyone casually did not escape his notice and he felt gratified! On the other hand, he had no ill-feelings even if a hundred wrongs were done to him, because of his mastery over his self.

Sri Rama used to be in the company of pious men, who were senior to him in terms of moral worth, enlightenment and age so as to benefit by their experience and wisdom.

He was talented (बुद्धिमान्) affable (प्रियंवदः) and valiant (वीर्यवान्) yet not elated with his extraordinary prowess !

Sri Rama never told a lie, was learned and a respector of his elders. He was full of compassion, (सानुक्रोशः), had conquered anger (जितःक्रोधः), consoled the miserable (दीनानुकम्पी), exercised self-control and was ever-pure (शुचिः), both within and without.

Sri Rama never took delight in any action which did not contribute to his improvement. He did not relish gossip. Sri Rama was very discreet and always knew the right place and time for speech and action.

He was pious. He had the ability of knowing the capacity and inner working of the mind of anyone appearing before him.

He had mastered all Sciences, and knew the essence of the Vedas. Being a Kshatriya prince, Sri Rama excelled his father, King Dasaratha, in archery.

Sri Rama was truthful and was always straight forward in his dealings.

He was well versed in Dharma and set an example to others!

Sri Rama had cultivated a keen memory and was quick-witted. With all such virtues, He was yet very humble and self-controlled. Sri Rama was ever alert and laziness was something unknown to him! He was resourceful and was an expert in the management of the affairs of State.

Sri Rama had conquered anger, and never criticized or condemned others! He was neither overcome by praise nor he gave way to jealousy!

He was utterly unselfish and always dedicated his life and actions to the protection and welfare of others!

In short, the poet concludes, Sri Rama was an embodiment of patience like Mother Earth, had the wisdom of Brihaspati, the Guru of Gods, and the valour of Indra.

Hence, King Dasaratha who had the joy of watching His growth and development to maturity, felt a deep sense of relief that his noble son could be his fit and worthy successor!!

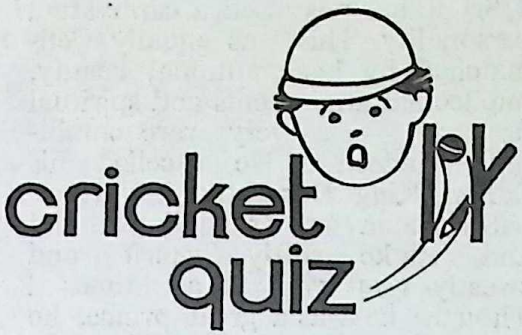
The various human virtues, painted so vividly by the poet, can easily be practised by the young. When they grow up, these will be the real strength which will enable them to meet life's problems at all times, with a smile!!

WIN THE BHARAT DARSHAN DRAWING CONTEST!

All you have to do is draw a map of South India, indicating the places and monuments visited with Dr. R. Vajreswari (from March 1979 till September 1980), through the serial "Bharat Darshan." The temples or monuments should look realistic. They should be drawn outside the border and arrows should be marked to indicate the places on the map, where they are situated.

The drawing should be fully done in black ink. The best map will be published in Balvihar. Besides, a book each will be given by Dr. Vajreswari to the first and second prize winners.

The drawings should be sent latest by October 15th to Dr. Vajreswari, Director Chinmaya Vidyalayas, C-70 Meenakshi Street, Thirunagar, Madurai-625 006.



By Anandji Jamnadas Dossa

1. What is a hat-trick and how was this name derived ?
2. Sunil Gavaskar was awarded the title of Padma Bhushan. Who are the other Indian players to receive this honour and when ?
3. Which are the National Trophies in Indian Cricket for—

A. National Championship of India
B. Zonal Championship of India
C. Inter-Universities Championship
D. Zonal Universities Championship
E. All India Schools Tournament
F. Limited Over Games
G. For players under the age of 22 and 15.

4. Why do cricketers wear white ?
5. What is the record in Indian cricket for capturing most wickets in a first-class match ? By whom, against whom and when ?

(See October issue for the answers.)

The mind is the seat of all feelings whereas the intellect is the discriminating faculty whereby man distinguishes the good from the bad

The Swastik Textile Mills Limited

V. N. Purao Marg, Chembur, Bombay-400 071.

The Lord of The Seven Hills

By Dr. R. Vajreswari.

Vakula Mallika started on her journey to the palace to meet Dharunidevi and fix the marriage of her son Srinivasa with Padmavati. Meanwhile, Srinivasa took upon himself the role of a soothsayer from a hill tribe. With a baby tied to her back, with a basket on her hip and a small stick in hand, she went into the city offering to predict the future. Entering the palace, she read the palm of Padmavati. With a charming smile, she told her of the meeting with the Lord in the garden and the envoy that would come with the marriage proposal. Receiving a handsome reward, she left the palace, doubly happy.

Vakula Mallika was received with honour and the marriage proposal was accepted. The divine wedding was performed with glory. There is the temple of Devi Padmavati, three miles south of Tirupati, at aplace known Tiruchanur. All devotees who visit Tirumalai for the darshan of Lord Srinivasa, believe that their pilgrimage is complete only when they have darshan of Devi Padmavati.

Every day is a day of festivity in Tirupati and Tirumalai. Thousands of pilgrims stand in a long queue for the darshan of the Lord. He is a giver of boons and devotees offer the richest gifts – gold, silver and currency notes. Many offer the hair on their heads and after a bath in the Pushkarani tank, they go for darshan.

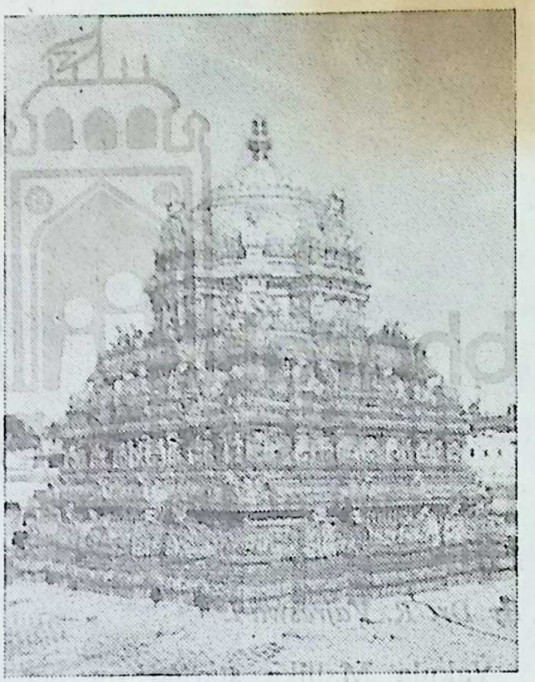
This temple is the richest one in India. The administrative unit known as Tirumalai – Tirupati Devasthanam, is providing varied facilities to the pilgrims.They also run a university, colleges, schools and other charitable institutions, from the offerings of the devotees. There is a publication department and many other activities are organised for spreading the message of Hinduism.

The temple is a masterpiece of Dravidian architecture. The main gopuram faces the east. The Dwaja — Sthamba (flag-staff), Vimana over the Sanctum Sanctorum, the doors leading to the Sanctum are covered with gold plates. When we stand before the Bangaru Vakili (golden door), on either side are the beautiful copper images of Jaya and Vijaya, the sentinels who are on duty. The doors contain panels of all forms of Vishnu. We enter the hall leading to the Sanctum. Then we behold Lord Srinivasa standing on a lotus pedestal. The majestic beauty and glory of the Lord, the smiling

face and the gracious glance, captivate our hearts. The Lord is about 9 ft. high, with four arms. The upper two hands are carved to hold the Sudarsana Chakra on the right hand and the Pancha Janya Conch on the left hand. The lower right hand is in Varada pose (boon giving and lower left hand rests on the knee) This signifies that for the Lord's devotees, all the problems and worries of life are only knee-deep! Mother Lakshmi is carved on the chest of the Lord.

The Lord is decked with precious jewels. The gem-set golden crown, the ear-ornaments, the covers of chakra and conch, the covers for the lower hands, many necklaces, the Dasavatara belt with the sword, the covers for the feet, many ornaments for the hands and legs, the plaques for Goddess Lakshmi on the right and Goddess Padmavati on the left — all these capture our attention. Every Friday, 'Abhishekam' is done to the Lord. If you are fortunate to be present then, you can see the natural glory and grandeur of the Lord, without the barriers of the shining golden ornaments!

In accordance with the legend referred to earlier, the Lord manifested himself as Srinivasa, in the ant-hill and commanded the king of the region to build a temple. This event had taken place ages ago. Many temples must have been built around this sacred spot chosen by the Lord. Renovations were done from time to time. It is accepted that the present Sanctum was built in the eighth century A. D. It is 12 ft. square and the walls are of cut-stone. The Vimana over the Sanctum is a splendid one and it is called Ananda Nilayam, the abode



Anandanilaya Vimanam

of bliss. It has been gilded many times by kings. We learn that in the thirteenth century, a king performed the Thulabara Ceremony (weighing himself against gold) and presented the entire gold for the gilding of the Vimana. The Vimana is three storeyed with a Kalasam on the top. There are bas-reliefs of Avatars of Vishnu, images of Garuda and Anjaneya, a replica of Lord Srinivasa, which is called Vimana Srinivasa and lovely lion figures.

The glory of Lord Srinivasa has been sung by Great Alwars (Vaishnava Saints) and musicians through the centuries. Sankaracharya offered worship in this temple. It was Ramanujacharya who was responsible for laying down the rules and regulations of worship and making it the most important Vaishnava shrine of the South. There are innumerable accounts about royal

devotees and commoners who had contributed to the development and the wealth of the temple.

Do you remember our visit to the temple of Sankara Narayana ? It is interesting to learn that there have been devotees who consider Lord Srinivasa as Hari-Hara. The crescent-moon on the makuta of the Lord, the Naga-abaranas, the jata-juta (flowing locks of hair) are pointed out to explain this Siva aspect. There are some who consider Him as Muruga (Subramanya) for whom there are many famous shrines in the south. Yet another group claims that it is a Devi shrine. The presence of lions on the Vimana, the use of turmeric powder for abishekam, the name "Bala" given to the deity are some of the points considered by them. It is interesting to note that North Indian devotees refer to the Lord as "Balaji". Whatever be the deity, we behold in this famous shrine, there is no doubt that the deity is a giver of boons, healer of sicknesses and bestower of peace and joy.

There are many mantaps with fine sculptures, depicting the scenes from the many Avatars of Vishnu. There are some bronze statues of kings and queens. The statues of King Achutaraya and his queen, King Krishnadevaraya and his two queens are very delicately carved and their pose reveals the devotion of the royal patrons who had made many endowments to the temple. There are many important annual festivals that are witnessed by thousands of devotees. Beautiful gold-plated Vahanas of Garuda, Elephant, Chandra-prabha, Suryaprabha are used in the festivals. By payment of fixed amounts, devotees can organise special festivals. At Tirumalai, every day is important, as thousands throng to get a glimpse of the Lord of the Seven Hills. **Concluded.**

HONESTY

By Bishan Swaroop Aggarwal

In a village, an old farmer used to live on a meagre salary. When he lost his job, he wandered hither and thither in search of livelihood.

One day when it grew dark he reached the field of his old master with his seven year old daughter. When he found nobody around him, he began to cut the crop fast.

When the girl saw this, she at once held the hand of her father and said, "Father ! You have looked well all around except one side." The father said, "Which side, dear daughter ?" The girl pointed to the sky, "That side ! God is watching you".

The father at once became alert. He decided not to do it again. Hugging his daughter, he said, "Dear child ! Today you have taught me such a lesson that I will not forget it throughout my life". After this, the farmer returned home straight.

Reaching home, he found the Munshi of his master already waiting for him. The munshi said, "The lambardar has been kind enough to send you ten rupees as your due salary. If you work honestly, you will get twenty rupees a month. You may come to work from tomorrow".

The old man undertook the job the next day. The lambardar entrusted him with the field. After this, the old farmer was always happy. He was very grateful to his daughter.

THE BETRAYAL

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

Retold by Lalogue Postvala

Napolean Bonaparte once said "A faithful friend is a true image of the Deity." True friendship is to be valued, for there are many who make friendly advances for selfish reasons. These pretenders cause much harm. Poor Ugly's trust was also betrayed by false friends. This is his story.

An Arab merchant was crossing a desert. His caravan of camels was loaded with rich silks and precious gems. He was going to a big city to trade. To reach the city, he had to pass through a thick forest. As his caravan approached the edge of the forest, he heard the loud roars of a lion. The frightened camels scampered off in all directions. One of them called Ugly rushed into a clump of trees and hid himself. When the roaring stopped, Ugly slowly came out of hiding to rejoin the others, but he found that his master had left without him.

Disappointed, Ugly wandered about aimlessly in the forest. At last, tired and weary, he rested under a tree. As he was dozing, the lion, who had roared, came to the same spot with his followers — a crow, a jackal, and a leopard. These three animals followed the lion everywhere, feeding on the leftovers after the lion had eaten his kill.

On seeing the camel, the lion exclaimed, "What a funny looking creature !"

"It's a camel. It lives in the desert and is also called the ship of the desert," said the jackal.

Their voices woke up Ugly. "Sirs, my name is Ugly," said he. "I'm a stranger to these parts. I'm hungry and lost. Can you tell me where I can find some food and shelter ?"

"How did you come here ?" queried the lion.

Ugly then told the whole story. The lion laughed and said, "The roars you heard were mine. I've a habit of doing that after my meals."

Feeling sorry for Ugly's plight, the lion granted him permission to stay in the forest and promised him his protection.

Sometime later, the lion had a big fight with an elephant. The fight lasted for the whole day. At the end of it, both the animals were bleeding profusely from their wounds.

The lion painfully crept into his cave. The elephant lumbered off to his part of the forest. As the days went by, the lion and his followers became hungrier and hungrier. The wounded lion could not go out and hunt. His followers were no good at catching any prey. They all grew quite lean.

The camel used to visit his friends daily. One day, after he left, the

jackal cried out, "Why can't we make a meal of the camel ? Look how plump he has grown under your protection, my Lord !"

"No, my friend. We cannot do such a mean thing. I promised to guard him."

The cunning jackal quickly replied, "Sire, if Ugly himself offers his body to save you from dying, would you then eat him ?"

"Oh, he'll never do that," said the lion.

"He will. He will," said the departing jackal.

The next day, outside the cave, he explained his plan to his friends, the crow and the leopard.

When Ugly came, the crow cawed, "My master, I can't bear to see you starving. Please eat me."

"My friend," declared the jackal, "You're too small. Let our dear king eat me. I'll make a better meal."

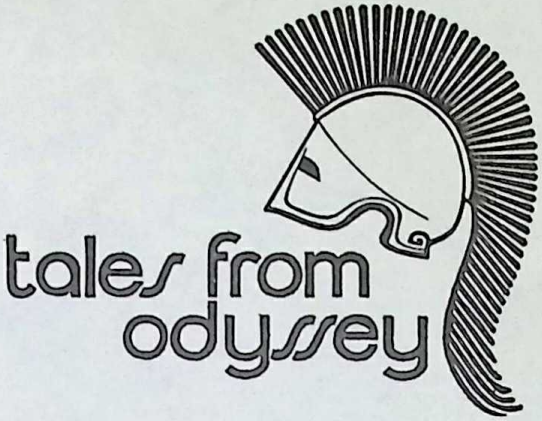
The leopard pushed the crow and the jackal aside, saying "Sire, don't listen to them. I'm bigger than them. I've decided to appease your hunger."

The lion protested "Never, never will I eat my faithful friends. I would rather die of starvation than harm my faithful servants."

Ugly, listening to all this, thought, "I too better present myself as a meal to the lion. Surely they are my friends; they will not harm me."

Then turning to the lion, the camel said, "Master, I offer my life to save yours."

No sooner had he said this than the animals pounced on him and tore him to pieces.



The Divine Messenger

By P. Varadarajan

Those words of Eurycleia soothed Penelope a little bit. She stopped weeping. After taking a bath, she went up to her chamber and began to pray to Athene. "O thou, Goddess Athene, don't you hear my cry ? Why do you persecute me like this ? Have I not made enough offerings to you ? My husband too has sacrificed a lot of heifers to you. Come save my son. Bring him back safely and set at naught the plot of the wooers."

Athene did hear her voice. At the same time, the wooers were talking to each other ridiculing Penelope. One of them remarked, "Penelope is quite unaware of our plot to kill her son. Perhaps in her room, she is preparing to marry one of us". But Antinous stopped him and said, "Friends, let us not talk like this. It is not good for us. Someone may overhear us and inform Penelope of our plot. We must accomplish it in silence." He then selected twenty men. They proceeded to make arrangements

for their journey. Their idea was to ambush Telemachus on his return journey to Ithaca.

Penelope rose from her prayer. She neither ate nor drank anything.

The worry about the safety of her son was gnawing at her mind. Brooding over this, she got tired and fell asleep.

Athene was not indifferent to the prayer of Penelope. She wanted to relieve her anxiety and devised a plan. She made a phantom and gave it the semblance of Penelope's sister. She asked it to allay the anguish of Penelope and sent it to the palace of Odysseus. It entered the chamber where Penelope was sleeping and standing above her head, addressed her, "Penelope, poor girl, have your sorrows enervated you to sleep ? Brooding over your son's safety is not necessary. The immortal Gods don't intend to make you sob. Your son has not done any evil action. Hence the immortal Gods won't let him perish at the hands of the wooers."

The phantom so contrived it that its words did not wake up Penelope. Even while sleeping, she heard them and answered as in a dream. "Sister, is it you ? What a pleasant surprise ! Do I really find my sister here ? Well, then, why do you want me to cease weeping ? My sorrow knows no bounds. My husband was very famous among the Greeks. Through Greece, his fame was resounding. He is not beside me now. I am not even sure whether he is dead or alive. To add to my sorrows, my son now has gone on a voyage. The wooers are running after him to kill him. So besieged with sorrows, how do you expect me to cease weeping ?

"Come, come, cheer up. What

is the use of mere weeping ? Weeping cannot bring in deliverance. Listen, your son is in no danger. He has gone under the protection of one whom the whole world prays to for protection. No less than Goddess Athene herself has accompanied him. When she is there, what harm can happen to your son ? She is filled with pity on seeing your plight. That is why, she has sent me to soothe you".

"What a fool I am to have taken you for my sister ! How can she come here all of a sudden from her house so far away ? You are indeed a divine messenger. You must be knowing all those things which are baffling to us. Come, have the kindness to tell me about my husband. Is he dead or alive ? Can I have the pleasure of meeting him again ?"

"Don't ask me any questions about your husband. I am not enjoined to tell you anything about him. My errand is over with telling about Telemachus." So saying, the phantom disappeared into the air. Penelope started up from her sleep. She was much cheered by the Divine message she heard in her dream.

Meanwhile, the wooers started on their voyage. There was a rocky isle between Ithaca and Pylos. It had a harbour. The wooers reached there. They were waiting for Telemachus with venom in their hearts.

(To be Continued)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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CONTEMPLATION FOR MOTHERS ON COMMUNICATION

By Lalita Frazier

Do you remember hearing the story "THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES ?" This is about a very proud and pompous emperor who always had to have the best of everything — just to show off. And some unscrupulous tailors thought of a way to capitalize on their emperor's weakness for praise and grandeur. They told him that they had imported some very rare (and very costly) thread that had all the beauty of the finest silk, but alas, they explained, it's full intricate beauty could be appreciated by only the most cultured eye — its delicate nuances of colour and texture were reserved for only the man of exquisite sensitivity and could never be fully appreciated by the dull commoner, the fool.

The emperor naturally assumed that he must surely be one of the rare ones, gifted with such extraordinary sight, and ordered the tailors to weave him cloth and sew a garment out of this wonderful thread. They started to work; the looms clicked back and forth throughout the night. Needles stitched thin air until, at last, the clothes were ready and presented to the emperor who, since of course there were no clothes really there, couldn't see them. But he surely couldn't admit to being a common fool so he admired them profusely, richly rewarded the tailors for their magnificent work and declared a holiday with a parade so that all the people could admire his special wardrobe.

News of the emperor's, clothes and how he would share this rare sight with all who had some appreciation for "the finer things in life", spread throughout the kingdom. Everybody lined the streets to witness their emperor modelling a cloth that was sure to be the fashion rage of the future. Of course, nobody wanted to seem an uncultured fool, so all "ooh'd and aaah'd" as the emperor passed (dressed in his underwear).

But there was one small child who squeezed between the legs of the crowd to get a tiny peep as the king rode by, and when he finally saw the emperor riding so proudly on the gold-bedecked and peacock-feathered white horse with ornate bells jingling so ceremoniously from the saddle, he could not be distracted from the fact that the emperor had, indeed, nothing on except his undergarments. And he said so right out loud : "But the emperor has no clothes !" Only a few such repetitions were necessary for all the country folk to come to their right senses and agree, and for the emperor to look down at his ridiculously unclad body and in embarrassed fury, return to the palace to seek out the long-gone tailors.

This total honesty is what we have to look forward to in communicating with our children. It's not that we alone are the givers in this relationship of parent to child — we have much to gain by the child's insights, honesty, love of fairness, capacity to overlook or forgive errors, the child's willingness to try again and again to reach an understanding and live in harmony with our ways of thinking and behaving. Such noble qualities, when they are primarily assumed and predictably seen expressing in our children, just naturally command our respect.

The Mystery of the Missing Uncle

By Chitra Rao

"Where is Asha ?" asked Ashwin as he walked into the library. His sister Anita and her friend Shashi were browsing through some books while he and Satish played a game of tennis. The four of them usually met their friends at the club.

"Asha did not come today as she had to go to the station to receive her grand-uncle. He is coming from the South", said Anita.

Just then, Satish walked in "Who is coming from the South ?", he asked. "Asha's Grand Uncle", replied Shashi. "He does a lot for the tribals living there and it seems he knows most of their songs and poems. Asha has never seen him, and her mother last saw him when she was 10 years old".

"An interesting uncle to have", observed Satish.

"Anyway, Shashi, we better make a move, as Mummy and Daddy have to go out in the evening".

"We'll come back too", said Ashwin and the four of them left the club together.

The next morning, on their way to school, they stopped in front of their friend's place.

'Asha", called Anita.

The door soon opened and Asha came out. It seemed as if she had been crying. "Why Asha, what's the matter ?" asked Satish. "It's Grand Uncle. He has disappeared. On the way to the station, we got caught in a traffic jam. By the time we arrived at the station, the train had already arrived. There was no sign of him, so we asked the T. C. We showed him a photograph which uncle had sent us, since we had not seen him for so long. He said that this man had gone out just a few minutes earlier.

We thought he had decided to find his way to our house on his

own, so we came back. There was no sign of him at home. Around 8 o'clock, we went to the police station to ask for their help. "Don't worry, Asha. He will come soon", her friends consoled her.

But their optimistic assurance did not come true. It was a week since Asha's grand uncle had disappeared. One evening, Ashwin suggested going to Asha's place to find out if there was any news.

Asha replied in the negative. "If there is no news by next week, we are thinking of publishing his photograph in the paper and that is something none of us want", she said.

"Could you show us his photograph ?", asked Satish.

Asha returned and handed them a photograph of a tall man with a flowing beard.

"That's a rudraksha mala he is wearing, isn't it ?", asked Shashi.

"Yes", replied Asha "he has always worn it. My mother remembers him wearing it, even when she was young".

Just then, Asha's mother walked in. "If I had not invited him, all this wouldn't have happened", she said.

"Aunty, it is not your fault", said Anita.

"What is his name, Aunty ?" asked Shashi.

"Mr. Rammurthy, though he is generally called Ramu Tata which means grand father", replied Asha's mother.

"Was there anyone you know, travelling in the same train ?", asked Ashwin.

"Yes, Mrs. Jones, whose husband owns the bakery, and one of her neighbours, Mrs. Rao. In fact, they were in the same compartment. She had come over to our place two days ago. It seems she had spoken to him and he told her that he was coming here and when she said that she knew us very well, he asked about us", said Asha.

On their way back, Satish said "Since tomorrow is a holiday, let us go to the station and see if we can meet the T. C. He may have some information". The next day, the two boys went to the station.

As they approached the T. C. Satish enquired,

"Were you on duty when the Dadar - Madras Express arrived on the 22nd ?"

"Yes, I was. Why do you ask ?"

"Do you remember the old man who went past you ?" asked Ashwin.

"Old man ?" he asked.

"Soon afterwards, a lady came and showed you a photograph of his", added Satish.

"Oh, yes, I remember. What about him ?" asked the T. C.

"Well, he happens to be our friend's Grand Uncle and he has disappeared....."

"Disappeared ?" said the young man who had been talking to the T. C.

"This is my nephew, Satish, who I think travelled with the man you mentioned", said the T. C.

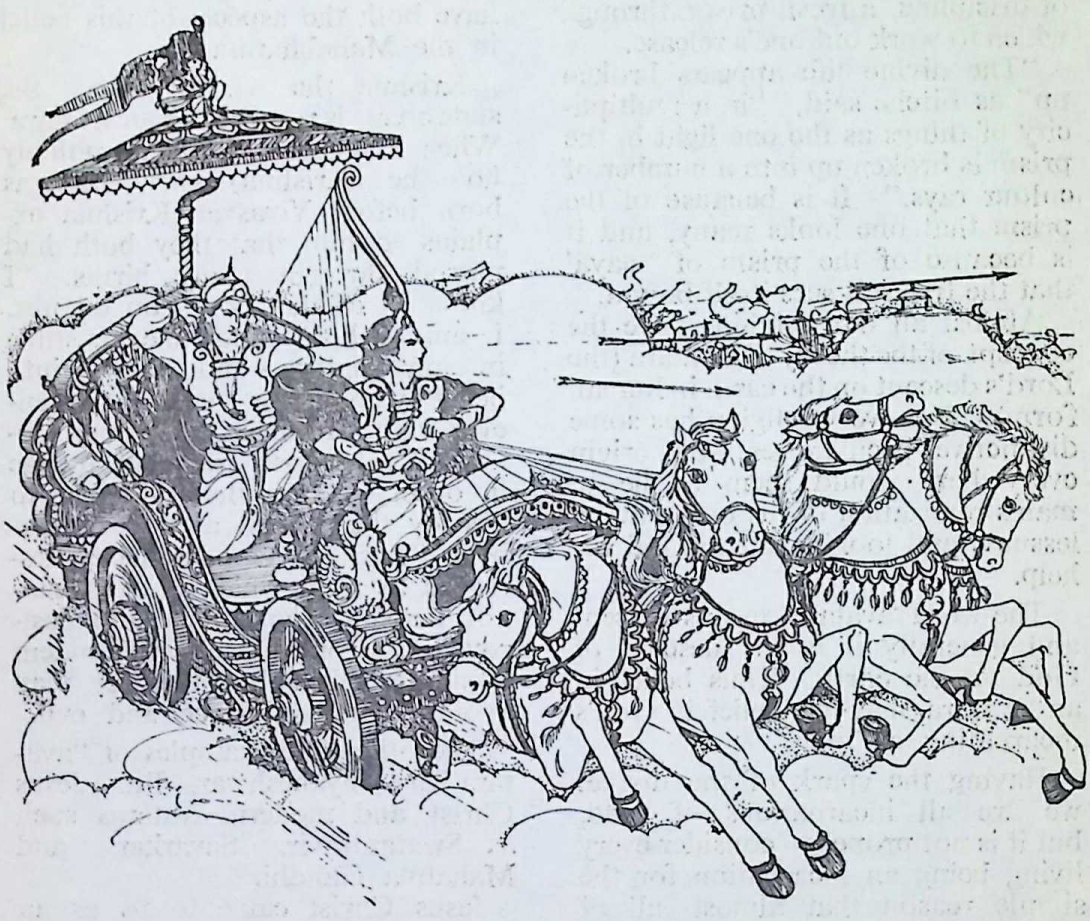
"Did you really ? Did you notice anything odd ?" asked Ashwin.

"It was his first visit to Bombay and he was very excited".

(To be Continued.)

Avatara And The Four Varnas

By Manju B. Navale
(14 *years*)



This is one of the five essays received from youngsters in Sangli for an Essay Competition assessed by Swami Purushottamanandaji during the Sangli Yagna from 23-10-79 to 1-11-79.

It is not our appearance but our character which gives us a good position in our society. Such holy persons are really the incarnations of God.

If we do not know with absolute certainty that God is, we could not live. Even the Sun and the Moon

would go out, if they began to doubt. We are not ourselves alone; we are God-men. Death is but a 'sleep and a forgetting' and the individual self wakes up in other physical environments to continue the old unfinished race towards the goal. Each rebirth is a fresh school of discipline, a fresh prison through which to work out one's release.

"The divine life appears broken up" as Fitche said, "in a multiplicity of things as the one light in the prism is broken up into a number of colour rays." It is because of the prism that one looks many, and it is because of the prism of 'maya' that the free self sees itself bound.

Almost all the religions have the concept of the theory of 'avatara'(the Lord's descent on the earth in human form). But every religion has some distinctive peculiarities. Its origin everywhere would seem to lie in man's realization of his own powerlessness and looking up to God for help.

The word 'avatara' means descent and generally it is the descent of God on the earth. Thus belief in an avatara may be belief in God's incarnating as man.

Having the spark of the divine, we are all incarnations of God, but it is not proper to consider every living being an incarnation for the simple reason that almost all of us reveal the human or the mortal part of us more predominantly than the immortal part of us. Arguing thus, we might say that the ultimate reach of human endeavour is the realization that the aspirant himself and everything around him is an incarnation of the Divine.

"The one secret, the greatest of all," says Patmore, "is the doctrine of incarnation, regarded not as a historical event which occurred three thousand years ago, but as an event which is renewed in the body of everyone who is in the way to fulfilment of his original destiny." We have both the aspects of this belief in the Mahabharata.

Krishna, the warrior and the statesman, is regarded as an avatara. When Arjuna asks Krishna politely how he (Krishna) knew he was born before Vivasvat, Krishna explains to him that they both had passed through many births. "I know all of them but you do not. I am unborn and inexhaustible in my nature and come into being by my mysterious power whenever right declines and wrong prevails. I take birth from age to age in order to save the righteous, to destroy the wicked and to re-establish Dharma. Good is never destroyed as right which is truth cannot perish. The wicked are destroyed as wrong has no independent existence. Knowing this, let man avoid untruth, violence and evil."

The other fine examples of "avatara" are Dnyaneshwar, Ram, Jesus Christ, and modern avataras such as Swatantravir, Savarkar and Mahatma Gandhi.

Jesus Christ came to us as an one unknown, without a name, just at a lake side. He came to men who knew him not. He said 'Follow thou Me' and set us those tasks which he had to fulfil for our times. He commanded those who obeyed him, whether they were wise or simple. Christ is the son of

God for Christians whom the Gospel describes as identical with God, "I and my father are one."

The Jains' conception of their Arhat and the Buddhists of Buddha are similar. Mahavir and Buddha are also avataras who helped to enlighten the people.

Mahatma Gandhiji is regarded as the greatest avatara of modern times. He showed people the right path. He struggled to achieve independence for Indians and also for the people all over the world. He fought non-violently against enemies. He had faith in God and Truth as he used to say 'Truth is God.' He led the people from darkness to light. Thus he was on incarnation of God.

All these "avataras" play an important role in our society. God's mills grind slow but sure.

Krishna, the creator, formed the four varnas based on Gunas (nature) and Karmas (actions).

Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudras are the four Varnas.

Gunas are of three types — Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.

The Geeta says sattva binds man to his body by conscious happiness and knowledge, rajas by restlessness and misery and tamas by heedlessness, lethargy and sleep. Knowledge, light, happiness indicate predominance of sattva. Greed, restlessness, yearning indicate the predominance of rajas and dullness, heedlessness, lethargy of tamas.

The state of "sattva" is pure, "rajas" is alloyed, and "tamas" is impure. Those characterised by Sattva rise upwards, those by rajas remain on the earth; those by tamas go down to the lowest species. sattva indicates the highest state of selflessness, rajas that of calculating selfishness and tamas of blind passion and fury.

The doctrine of gunas is also the doctrine of karma and rebirth.

What we are, what we think, what we do is the result of what we have been through our ages. When a child is born, its good or ill is the result of its stock of "punya" (good deeds) or "papa" (sins).

When Sattva occupies first place, the person born is a Brahmin. The Brahmins are religious and intelligent. Brahmins are pure, calm and have the knowledge of consciousness.

A Kshatriya is born with the leadership of rajas followed by sattva and then tamas. He is bright and brave and charitable. He has knowledge even of consciousness. He fulfils the work or duty, to which he is born.

Mainly merchants are Vaishyas. They are born with the leading guna of rajas in them, followed by tamas. They have less sattva in them.

The Shudras or the labourers who are of the lowest species, have more tama gunas. Sattva is very rare in Shudras. To provide body labour is their privilege.

In the Vedas, the head is referred to as the Brahmin, hands as Kshatriyas, the stomach as Vaishya and legs as Shudras.

Such was the 'caste system' made by Krishna. Krishna did this with good intention but in modern times, much importance is given to money, and the men of lower species are suppressed. Moreover, people have not remained very sattvik.

Anyone who identifies himself with God and hence realizes that he is no doer, has no desire for fruit, is freed from the action of bondage. Maya is not an illusion, or a mirage, but veil or an obstacle that hides the Real, the clouds that obscure the sun in us, the golden lid that covers the face of the sun. According to Fitche, our seeing itself hides the objects we see, our eyes itself impede our eyes. The Reality at the back of which the diversity is but the shadow, is seen not with the eye of the flesh but with the eye of the spirit. It is the disciplined and self-controlled yogis, who see Him seated in himself with the eye of the spirit; those without self-control do not see Him, in spite of all his endeavour.

Thus Karma Yoga is the path of work towards God realisation.

A well spent life is the passport to heaven.

THE CRAFTY JACKAL

By P. Udayaraj (14 *years*)

In a forest, there lived a number of rats. They had a very wise and good king, who was almost as big as a boar.

A sly jackal wanted to tempt these rats and eat them. So he stood on one leg and turned his face towards the sun. The king rat approached him and asked, "Who are you and why do you stand on one leg?"

"My name is Godly. If I place all four legs on the ground, the earth will sink. I am very great. I worship the sun", replied the jackal.

So the rats gathered around the jackal and began to worship him. That evening, when the rats left to go to their homes, the jackal caught the last one to leave and ate him up as quickly as possible. Then he went back to standing on one leg.

Some days later, the king of the rats noticed that many of his subjects were missing. This made him greatly worried. "The jackal must be playing this trick on us", he thought.

The next day, after the gathering had broken up, the king walked to the end of the queue. The jackal was very pleased when he saw this and said to himself, "Today, I shall have a fine feast indeed."

The jackal pounced on the rat, but the rat was too quick for him. He clutched the throat of the jackal and killed him.

The rats returned when they noticed that their king was not with them. They were filled with admiration for their king when they heard the whole story from him. "How did you know that the jackal was a rogue?" they asked in wonder.

"I do not believe anyone who shows off too much. So I suspected him. To test him, I placed myself last in the line and caught him", the king replied.

DOES GOD REALLY EXIST?

Many times when I am relaxing and have nothing particular to do, my mind drifts to God. Does he really exist?

God, in the limited sense of the word, is considered to be a being with a form who sits in heaven and controls the world. In that sense, I don't think God exists. I do not believe in a God sitting in heaven and controlling the world. That is too narrow a meaning.

I think God is a formless force that is present everywhere and in all of us. He is the strength in us. He is the force that guides and controls the action of all beings. This inner voice is God. He shows us the right path but he has given us the freedom to choose between right and wrong.

God is a universal force, a supreme being. If God did not exist, we would not exist. There would be no force present in us to give us life. Even Nature would not exist. Nothing would exist.

I do pray to idols but that is not because I consider God a being with a form. I find it much easier to communicate with and conceive the idea of this force through an idol.

I believe that God exists. If he did not, I would not be here writing this article.

By Parimala Inamdar

Who is God? He is referred to in numerous ways — the Almighty, the Creator, the Destroyer, the All-pervading, Omnipotent Supreme! Indeed, according to me, He is like a director and manager of this whole world which is a stage with men and women as its players. Although it is said that Nature takes care of everything, there is definitely a powerful force that directs even Nature.

I adore God and worship God and give Him a form because it is difficult for me to pray fervently to an obscure and omnipresent force. My favourite Gods are Lord Ganesh, Lord Krishna and Goddess Saraswati.

Observing the complexity of nature is proof of God's handiwork. Even the smallest flower or insect has such an effective mechanism for its life, that when I see or read about it, I am cast in a stupor. God definitely exists. It is false pride on the part of those who deny it. Whenever a feeling of depression overtakes me, I resort to prayer.

In a world of sorrow and misery, where corruption is rife, this Protector is our only Saviour and then come our parents as his representatives. There is no friend as good and true as Him.

He has descended on earth in human form many times, according to Hindu mythology, to wipe away suffering and evil from the face of the earth. He smiles in the hearts of every happy person or cries in the hearts of the melancholy beings. To me, it is He alone who sees that justice is dealt out equally. Atheists many a time have reformed to believe in God by personal experience.

Mere meditation on His symbol, the Om, brings to me peace, calm and bliss. Truly without God, life is a farce and there can be no existence.

"Do your best and leave the rest to God," is my policy. Prayer to me is not just reciting some Mantra without knowing the meaning. It involves a loving communication with Him, when you experience bliss and feel that you can rely on Him for everything.

Many a time, I have made requests which he has fulfilled, perhaps not immediately but after some time. As a child, I used to pray to him with all my heart. When I was in Standard 2, I had lost my English language notebook just before the examination and it meant hours of labour for my mother, copying notes from my friend's book. I started praying. Every spare moment, I used to shut my eyes and request Him to help me find it. Every nook and corner was combed but nowhere did we find it. A week later it was found amidst my toys. God had made me undergo an ordeal but had eventually acceded to a small, fervent prayer. This incident has strengthened my faith and I have resorted to prayer ever since.

"I can face the world with courage and I get peace of mind," says my grandmother and I second her wholeheartedly. This world is an illusion, a creation of Brahma. Scientists who think themselves on the top of the world, merely scrape out a small fraction of that yet unknown sphere of knowledge created by the Lord.

By Nilima Kagal

"It is easy to destroy but very difficult to create," say the wise. But then have you ever wondered or stopped to consider as to who or what created this Universe and caused everything inanimate and all that "enjoys the breath of life?"

Some say it is a shapeless force-Shakti or energy. Others profess the existence of God as a 'Personal God' or Supreme Being who appeals to emotion through external form and worship. The choice to resort to either is left to us. We also have the alternative to cast both away and plunge into the uncertain depths of atheism, where mortals behold none greater than themselves.

But the majority of us prefer to believe in a God - be it a force or a being. This three letter word makes even the mightiest God-fearing man tremble. This concept of ours draws us into the depths of the ocean bed of religion. Religion has left on our society liberal brushes of freedom but also degraded society with indelible scars of evil.

Its advantages have played a part in moulding the 'samaj' but its evils have lowered man below his own esteem. Ever since the Dark ages—the Victorian ages of cynicism and doubt, material lust refused to acknowledge the presence of God. Since the advent of the Aryans to India, God was invoked as 'Agni' in fire sacrifices.

But then religion revealed in its vast assimilative roots, the toxic bacteria that till today infest our lives under a religious cloak. But we alone are to blame! It is we who have contaminated the purity of God according to our own conveniences.

Islam with its exclusive, monotheistic outlook on life and belief in 'Allah' or one God has carved a niche for itself in the realms of religion. Here God is worshipped as a force—the Supreme yet bodiless one as the Koran forbids them to manifest in any manner.

Then comes Hinduism which also has occupied a cavernous hollow in the worldly cave. It has no doubt lit up this cavern with its belief in 'Avatars' or the incarnations of God that repeatedly came to Earth to rescue her from her destruction. However, it too has left religion riddled with barriers of caste and creed. All this has defiled the sanctity of that God whom even Einstein described as a force.

It is man alone who has the power to reason and visualise abstract phenomena. He too nevertheless is too petty minded to grasp the magnificence of God as nothingess and hence he manifests Him as an idol.

"For what are men better than sheep or goats

That nourish a blind life within the brain

If knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer

Both for themselves and those who call them friend." (Tennyson). In what way is Man superior to beasts who possess all his assets but those of speech and reason? He is worse than them. Hence he found an idol—an idol who forms his ideal—an idol whom he adores, loves, worships and seeks solace in. It is only to limit the roving imagination of man to a definite form whom he can realize that prayer and idols exist. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." (Tennyson). Prayer does not necessarily mean the chanting of hymns and verses—it is something deeper. It is a spout through which the voice of the devotee intense with Bhakti reaches the divine.

The Divine is all pervading yet none created the Divine. Divinity alone created the world. This world of ours is just an illusion - a valley of celluloid which will melt away like a dream some day because it is a mere fancy or concept in the subconscious of the Maker's mind. There atheism cannot penetrate.

So be it Jesus, Rama, Allah or the "Satnam", God does exist as an indefinable Supernatural force—an energy that caused all but was caused by none—bears all but was borne by none—born of none.

A man may be tossed about by uncertain storms of life but the solution to it lies in finding an ideal in life and raising his personality to the loftier heights of the chosen ideal

United Phosphorous Private Ltd.

211, G. I. D. C. Area, Vapi 396 195, Gujarat.

NO MORE SWEETS FOR SPOTLESS

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

Retold by Lalogue Postvala

In the last issue of Balvihar, you read how the lion on the advice of his followers, was able to kill the camel, Ugly, and provide food for himself and his friends. In this month's story, the same lion, Spotless, suffers the loss of a regular source of delicacies because of the wrong action of his advisers.

At the edge of a city was a forest. It was a very thick jungle full of beautiful trees. A carpenter, named Trustgod having a shop in the city, went frequenty to the southern part of the forest to collect the precious 'anjana' logs for his furniture. Sometimes, his wife accompanied him.

In the same area lived Spotless with his followers, the jackal and the crow. With the lapse of time, the wounds inflicted on Spotless by the elephant during their great fight had healed. Once more, Hail and Hearty, the lion, fearlessly roamed the woods.

One day, the lion came across the carpenter cutting a tree. Though frightened by the huge lion, the carpenter still retained his wits. He bowed low before the lion and said, "Oh, Lord of the jungle, I'm honoured by your presence. To celebrate this great occasion, you must share my lunch which my wife has so lovingly prepared. There are many good dishes. I'm sure she must have had some premonition of your visit".

The lion was flattered. He replied magnanimously, "My good fellow, I don't eat rice and dal or sweets. I eat only meat. Yet to please you, I shall taste your food."

Trustgod quickly stuffed the lion with all kinds of delicacies–cakes,biscuits, halwa, and rice pudding. The lion was pleased with the carpenter's hospitality and to show his gratitude, he guaranteed him safety in the forest.

The carpenter, greatly relieved by the lion's friendliness, offered to bring him sweets daily. The only condition he made was that the lion should come alone.

The days passed. Spotless acquired a sweet tooth. He looked forward to the delectable preparations of the carpenter's wife. He started neglecting the hunting.

The jackal and the crow who used to feast on the remnants of the lion's kill had to go hungry many a day. At last they asked the lion, "Master where do you go daily and return in such a happy mood?"

At first, the lion refused to tell them his secret. At their persistent request, he revealed the source of his happiness. He told them that he had made a new friend, a carpenter, whose wife cooked the most tasty sweets. The carpenter shared them with him, and now "I no longer crave for the jungle meat," he said.

This upset the jackal and the crow. They cried together, "We shall go and kill the carpenter, then we'll not only kill our enemy but have enough meat for some time".

"No", thundered the lion. "I shall not permit this. I've assured the carpenter and his wife a safe passage through the forest. My word must be honoured."

This saddened the jackal and the crow. They moped for a day or two. Taking pity on his friends, the lion offered to share the sweets with them. He told them to stay at a distance when he was with the carpenter. "This way no one's feelings will be hurt," thought the lion.

The next day, the wily jackal and the crow accompanied the lion. Amongst themselves, they had planned to kill the carpenter and his wife. On seeing them at a distance, the carpenter and his wife quickly climbed a tree. The lion, standing with his friends under the tree—questioned, "Why are you frightened of my friends? Come down and meet my advisers. They too want to taste your sweets. Do not be alarmed. Have I not guaranteed you your safety in this forest?"

The wise carpenter and his wife stayed where they were. They were not reassured for they did not trust the lion's followers.

From that day onwards, they stopped coming to that part of the forest. Poor Spotless no longer got his sweets. He missed them, and regretted following the wrong advice of his followers.

A successful man never allows his faculty of discrimination and judgment to be disturbed by the rising tides of his emotions

Chinmaya Family, Kuwait

The Mystery of the Missing Uncle

By Chiira Rao

"He spoke a lot about his niece. The odd thing I noticed was that as we were nearing Bombay, he seemed very quiet and worried. When he found no one to receive him, he said he would find his way on his own, and walked away," said Satish.

"Did you notice anything odd?" asked Satish turning towards the T. C.

"Well now that you ask me, he seemed to be in a mighty rush to get away. He kept looking all round as if he was scared of being spotted," replied the T. C.

When the boys got home, they found the girls back from their classes.

"Did you find out anything?" asked Shashi

"Well, yes and no", replied Ashwin and told them all that they had learnt.

"Something happened on the way, which made him decide to disappear", said Anita.

"But what can it be?" asked Shashi.

"Why not go and see Mrs. Jones? Maybe she has something to tell us."

The four of them then went across to Mrs. Jones. On opening the door, she asked them "Come to order something for a party?"

"No, Aunty, we wanted to ask you about Asha's Grand Uncle, who travelled with you," explained Ashwin.

"Come in, and sit down while I put off the stove," she said, disappearing into the kitchen.

"Ah, what is it that you want to know?" she said, on coming back.

"Everything from the beginning," replied Satish.

"You know how it is when you travel. You ask your co-passengers where they are going. In the same way, I got talking to him and when he mentioned Bandra, I asked him who he was visiting and he mentioned Leela's name....."

"Who is Leela?" asked Ashwin.

"Asha's mother", replied Mrs. Jones. "After a while, I changed my seat. You see, I had been given the top berth and I couldn't possibly climb up, so I went to the other side, where I met Mrs. Rao. She won't be able to tell you anything, as she did not talk to him."

After sitting and chatting with her for sometime, the children left for home.

"We don't seem to be making any progress," remarked Shashi.

"We'll soon have four days' holidays. We must achieve something then," said Satish.

Two days later, Satish and Shashi were in their garden, when their friends, Ashwin and Anita came in.

"Hi, got any clues?" asked Satish.

"No, we came to invite you to Kalyan."

"Kalyan?" asked Shashi.

"Remember our cousins Avinash and Suman? Well, their school is celebrating its 'Silver Jubilee' and they have some programmes. Since we have holidays then, we thought we would go. You have been invited too," said Ashwin.

The children went and asked their parents and when permission was granted, they sat down to discuss the forthcoming trip.

Two days later, the four of them left with Ashwin's parents. Avinash and Suman were waiting for them at the gate. The next morning, the children left for the school. Avinash and Suman left them as soon as they were seated since they were taking part.

The third item, performed by Suman's class, was a beautiful tribal song. It was a South Indian song. Though the children couldn't follow the words, the action conveyed the gist of the story to them.

"That was beautiful. Do you think we could learn it, and perform it in our school?" asked Anita.

"Yes, let's ask Suman when she gets back", replied Shashi.

When the two of them came back,

the children started on their way.

"Suman, where did you learn that song? It was very nice", said Anita

"Well, actually we had gone to the park to decide the play we would perform, when an old man seated closeby came and asked as if we would like to learn a tribal song. Since it was something unique, we decided to do it", explained Suman.

"What was his name?", asked Satish.

"He never told us his name. We used to call him uncle and every evening he would teach us in the park," replied Suman.

"What did he look like?" asked Satish.

"Tall, thin, with a beard and very soft spoken."

"Why are you so interested in him?" asked Avinash.

"Well, he could be Asha's Grand Uncle."

"Who is Asha's grand Uncle?" asked Avinash.

The children soon told them about Asha's missing Uncle.

"Before we do anything further, we better make sure it is Asha's Grand Uncle", observed Anita.

"Let us go to the park this evening. If we can talk to him, may be we will learn something," said Suman.

That evening, the six of them left for the park. There was no sign of Uncle, but as they were leaving they saw him entering the park.

"Hello, Uncle! Everybody liked the song you taught us," she said.

"I am glad Suman," said the old man.

"Here are some friends from Bombay who want to learn it too," said Suman pointing out to them.

"Where did you learn the song from?" asked Ashwin.

"I learnt it from the tribals," he replied

"Are you from South India?" asked Anita.

"Yes, I am."

"Do you live here now?", asked Satish.

"Yes .... no. I am here on a holiday. I have to go now, got some work," said Uncle and disappeared.

"He didn't want to answer any questions", said Shashi.

"He was wearing the rudraksha-mala," observed Anita.

"What do we do now?" asked Ashwin.

"The best thing is to tell your parents. They might suggest something," said Satish.

The six children were soon telling the surprised elders all about their detective work.

"Ring up Asha's mother and ask her to come down. See if she can identify him," said Ashwin's father.

The children ran to the telephone to do as he suggested. Unfortunately, they couldn't get through. It was only the next morning around 10 o'clock that they could contact Asha.

Satish spoke to Asha's mother, telling her about all they had found. "Oh, I hope it's him. I'll come as soon as it is possible — the minute Asha's father comes back. He has gone out. We will drive down,", she said, excited.

"They will be coming here soon," announced Satish as he put down the receiver.

An hour later since they had nothing to do, they thought they would go to the library to get some books. On the way they had to pass the park. They saw Uncle going into the park.

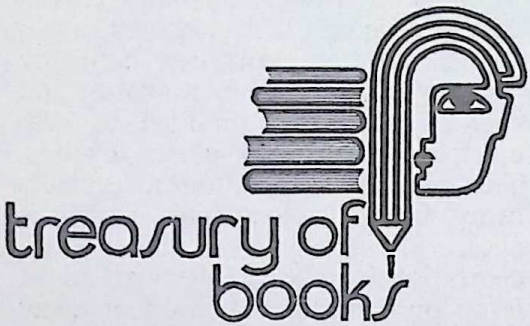
"Let's follow him", said Satish.

The four of them walked in and soon came upon him talking to the mali.

"I am glad I found you here. I am going away this afternoon. So I came to say good-bye," said Uncle.

The six children stood still "Oh! no, what do we do now?" asked Ashwin.

Continued on Page 25



THE MIGHTY LITTLE ATOM

By Dr. A. P. Thatte
I. B. H. Publishing Company
Pages : 32; Price : Rs. 6.

Have you ever wondered what we all are made up of? We are made up of millions and millions and millions of little atoms. Now, you will ask me, what is an atom? An atom is a minute, indivisible, solid sphere. So says Dr. Thatte. These atoms combine to form an element. There are 105 known elements in our Universe. They are hydrogen, helium, oxygen, nitrogen .....If I name all of them here, it will fill up the entire page!

These elements combine chemically to form a compound. The water which you carry to school in your water-bottles is a compound. Two units of hydrogen combine with one unit of oxygen and hey presto! Here we have water! Sounds strange, doesn't it? How can two gases combine to form a liquid? Well, you've got me there. I really wouldn't know how to explain it. But I'm sure many of you will be able to tell me soon, when you become great scientists and help our country to progress.

Did you know that even gases have weight? For example, oxygen is 16 times heavier than one unit of hydrogen, and aluminium is 27 times heavier .....Hence, we say that the atomic weight of oxygen is 16 and that of aluminium is 27.

Our world has seen many great scientists. The first scientist to come up with the atomic theory was John Dalton. Then, I'm sure you have heard of Marie and Peter Curie, the famous discoverers of radium. And so many more.

Beautifully and clearly illustrated, this book is a must for every child.

—Shalu

CHILDREN'S PROBLEMS

By Kamal (11 *years*)

Exams are coming
Children are worrying
Mothers are scolding
Children are crying
Have no fear
For GOD is here

PROBLEMS?

Do you have a problem? If you do, please write and tell us. We shall try and solve it. Remember two heads are better than one, so don't worry. Write a letter and pass your worries on to us.

You need not be afraid about your name being published. If you don't want your name to appear in Balvihar, please write and tell us and we shall not disclose it.

Don't forget to mention your age and the class which you are in. This will help Kamath Uncle to give the correct solution to your problem.

Dear Kamath Uncle,

I am studying in VIII std. My age is 13 years. I am good at my studies. I like reading story books written by our Swamiji. But my parents keep on scolding me not to read the story books always, since my eyes are already bad. In the class, our teacher tells us to read various kinds of books to improve our knowledge. But I am unable to do so. Please solve my problem. Kindly, don't publish my name in the Balvihar magazine.

Thanking you
Yours sincerely
'S'

Dear S,

I was very pleased to note that you like reading story books by Swamiji and you also want to read various books recommended by your teacher. But tell me what do you mean by saying "my eyes are already bad?"

If your eye doctor has not suggested your cutting down on reading, watching T. V., films — I don't see any reason why you should not read your school books, and story books. Some of the signs that show your eyes need check-up and remedy are : watering eyes, sore eyes, red eyes, headaches, difficulty in seeing near or far objects, holding the book too near or too far, hazy or blurred images. Even if you don't have any of these signs, there is no harm in having an eye check-up. The eye doctor will do his best to restore your eye-sight to normal by prescribing glasses and medicines, if necessary.

Here is how you can care for your eyes : 1. Every morning and night, make it a practice to dab cold water on your closed eyelids. This relaxes the eyes and also clears away unwanted particles near the eyes. 2. Always read under sufficient lighting —a 25-40 watt night lamp or tube light a few feet away from you. (Bulb companies recommend 200 watts!). The light should fall preferably from above your right shoulder. 3. Take frequent rests while reading by looking at the horizon or at a distance. If your eyes have a strained feeling — say during exams ... you may rest them with cotton (medical grade) dipped in water placed over your eyelids. If you so desire, you may also use some eye lotions available at chemist shops. 4. The ideal distance to keep your book while reading/writing is about 30 cms (one foot) away from your eyes. 5. A good, bala-

think! think! think!

Even when you are losing, retreat still fighting for every inch. Call up reinforcements from the Lord, through your devotion and surrender.
—Swami Chinmayananda

When you come across problems in life, you should not give up without trying your best to overcome them. You should pray to God wholeheartedly for the strength to fight. This is the thought for the month.

Based on it, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Balvihar. The upper age limit for this contest is 15 years. The last date for sending in entries is October 15th, so send your entry soon.

The Winner!

The Winner of the thought for the month of May 1980 is Vinay Srinivas of Kuwait (9 years). Congratulations, Vinay ! We have sent you "Tell me a story — Part II" and "I love you" as a prize.

Try to help the misguided ones to see their folly and stand up on their own sturdy feet in life.
—Swami Chinmayananda

Once upon a time, there was a boy called Ahimsaka who was driven out of his house because his father was angry with him. He was wandering through a forest when a robber stopped him to rob his money. Ahimsaka was too quick for him and soon had him at his mercy. The robber had shown him the way. Soon Ahimsaka came to be known as Angulimala which means"Finger-garland." Angulimala became a notorious robber, killing anybody who passed his way.

Once, Lord Buddha happened to pass by. As Angulimala ran after him, he found that the monk did not bother to stop. He said "Stop moving, monk." The reply was "I am not moving." This surprised Angulimala. He said, "I don't want your preachings; I want your fingers."

"Take them," said the monk.

This astonished Angulimala. He realised his mistake and fell at Buddha's feet. After this, he became a monk, helping people in need. One day, he went to a hut to beg for alms. A man, recognising him as Angulimala, alerted the other people. All the people together wounded Angulimala. Buddha found him and treated him, but alas it was of no use. Angulimala died, having changed completely from his earlier life.

By Vinay Srinivas

Australians have a stronger side than the one India met." Besides, yesterday's boys—Kim Hughes, Allan Border are today's men. I feel the Australian batting, so far built around the flashing blade of Greg Chappell, has come of age. Before the end of the series, the great Australian outback will throw up one more fast bowler to partner Lillee. India could be in trouble.
—*Bharat Savur.*

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES

1. A bottle
2. Universe
3. Breath.

By K. Geeta
(13 *years*)

Continued from Page 19

"We'll have to find out by ourselves if it is him," said Satish.

"But how?" asked Shashi.

As they were discussing, Uncle began walking away when suddenly Anita yelled "Ramu Tata."

The old man whirled round and as if realising that he had given away his secret, began to walk away rapidly.

"Wait", cried Anita running after him.

"How did you know I am ..... you've made a mistake" he said.

"No, I haven't made a mistake. You are Asha's Grand Uncle, aren't you?" she said.

"Yes, I am," replied the old man with tears in his eyes.

"Why did you disappear? Asha and her parents have been so worried about you."

"Worried about me? You must be mistaken," he said.

Suddenly Ashwin yelled "There's Asha's car,"

"Asha," Asha!, they yelled.

Satish ran upto the car and returned with Asha and her parents.

"Tata", cried Asha's mother running to her Uncle.

"Why did you disappear? We have been looking all over for you," she said.

"Child, why did you invite me when it was inconvenient for you?" he asked her.

"Inconvenient, how can that be?," she asked him.

"I overheard Mrs. Jones talking with someone. She said 'Poor Leela is having a lot of problems. They have been having guests coming continuously, and now another guest is travelling on the same train.' I knew she was talking about me, since I had just told her I was coming to your place." he said.

"Oh! Tata, that's another Leela. If you don't believe me, ask the kids. I haven't had guests staying with me at all," she explained "You mean I made a mistake?" he asked hopefully.

"Of course, and I am taking you back with me at once. I don't want you disappearing again", she said.

Concluded.

Let us develop a sense of gratitude to the lord by focusing our attention on what we have.

With Best Compliments from
Lekha, Seema and Chitra
(Cannanore Bala Vihar Members)

bharat darshan

LEPAKSHI CALLS

By Dr. R. Vajreswari

Now that we are in Andhra Pradesh, let us visit the temple at Lepakshi. It contains a rich heritage of Andhra art. This sixteenth century temple has sculptures that are bold and outstanding, and paintings that are lovely and second only to Ajanta.

Lepakshi is situated in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh. It is about 100 km from Bangalore. What does Lepakshi mean? The literal meaning is Lepa akshi (painted eye). It could mean a place of arts as charming and attractive as the painted eyes of a lovely lady. Some people have tried to attribute Puranic significance by connecting the place with Jatayu, the great fighter against Ravana.

The temple is built on a hillock called Kumarasaila, (Kumara-tortoise; saila-hill) The hillock is 12 km from Hindupur. There is a big Shiva temple dedicated to Lord Veerabhatra. Every bit of the space of the hillock has been used to build shrines and halls. There are watch-towers and battlements for the purpose of defence also.

There is an interesting but sad story about the builder of the temple. Virupanna, the founder, was the Governor of this region under the control of King Achutharaya of the Vijayanagar Empire in the sixteenth century. This king was the brother of the famous Krishnadeva Raya. Virupanna ruled the region well and his treasury became full. He was a Veera-Saivite. This was a sect of Saivism. He decided to build a magnificent temple to Lord Veerabhadra, the presiding deity of the sect. The state funds were spent in raising the temple and decorating it with lovely sculptures and paintings.

One day, messengers from the court of Achutharaya arrived with a warrant for the Governor. Feeling that he would be blinded by the king, Virupanna decided to inflict that punishment on himself. He went to the temple, prayed to Lord Veerabhadra, then plucked out his eyes, threw them on a wall and collapsed. We are shown two small holes, with flowing red stripes resembling dried-up blood. Whether this is true or not, we see that the temple is incomplete and some thing unexpected must have stopped the work of glorious art.

The sculptures in this temple are attractive and abundant. It is the size of some of the sculptures that is the striking feature. There is a beautiful and big Ganesh whom we must worship first. True to the

tradition of Andhra art heritage, there is a magnificent Nagalinga. In the coils of this seven-hooded Naga, there is a Shivalinga. Look at the picture of the Nagalinga and you will appreciate its size and grandeur.

For the followers of Veera-Saivism, the Basavanna (bull) is of great significance. Veeranna, the great devotee must have been struck by the big rock, a little away from the temple. He ordered the sculptors to shape a Basavanna out of the standing rock. The result is the Biggest Nandi (bull) in India. The Chamundi bull of Mysore, the Tanjore bull of the Brihadeeswara temple are smaller in size than the Lepakshi bull. It is 18 ft in breadth, 30 ft in length and 15 ft high. Look carefully at the picture of the bull. The horns are short; the ears are pricked to hear the least sound; the garlands of varied types and sizes of bells add grandeur to it. We go round and admire the decorative details and the majestic pose of the bull.

As we go round the temple, we see the lovely images of Gods and Goddesses, scenes from their life, and stories from the Puranas. Two stories have been given in detail. One is that of 'Kiratarjuniya', which is the story of Arjuna's penance for Pasupa-astra. The finest poryal of this story is in Mahabalipuram and we will see it in detail when we go there. The other story is that of a great Saiva saint, Sirutondar and it is one of the 63 accounts described in the Tamil classic named' Periapuranam.'

Paranjothi was the Commander-in-Chief of the famous Pallava King Narasimhavarman, whose victories and artistic activities you must have read in history. After retirement, the commander became a great Saiva devotee and took on the name "Sirutondar" (Siru-humble; tondar-servant). He would never have his meal without feeding at least one Saiva devotee. One day, he could not find anyone till noon. At last a devotee arrived but he laid down an unusual condition regarding his meal. He demanded the cooked flesh of a five year old boy, from a good family and whose parents were willing to cut the body of the child and cook it themselves. Sirutondar and his wife agreed to the conditions and sacrificed their only boy 'Siraladevan' and spread the lunch before the devotee. He startled them by saying that their child should be called to dine with him. With perfect faith, Sirutondar said, "Sirala, come and have darshan of the devotee". The child walked in, wreathed in smiles and the devotee disappeared. Behold! Shiva and Parvati appeared and blessed them saying "We are pleased with your great devotion."

Some scenes from this great story are depicted in the temple. The most poignant scene is that of the parents cutting the child. It is vividly portrayed. The popularity of this great story of faith is indicated by its being presented in the sixteenth century temple and so far away from the place of its occurrence.

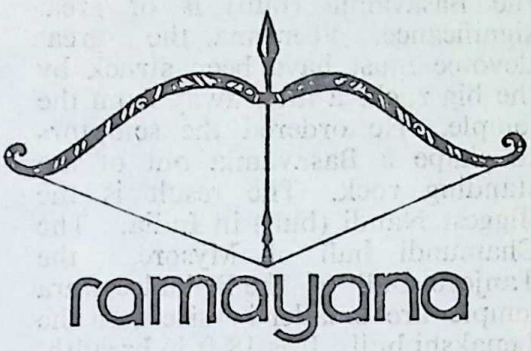
There are two great mantaps that we must visit as they are full of

lovely sculptures. One is the Kalyana mantap. There are 16 pillars, depicting the celestial wedding of Parvati and Shiva and the Gods and Goddesses who had come to witness the great event.

The other is the 'Lata mantap' (Creeper mantap). There are 40 pillars here; each has four curved sides. The picturesque details of creepers, flowers, fruits and birds on these pillars give us the feeling that we are in a pleasure garden. Both these mantaps are incomplete as there are only standing pillars without a suitable ceiling. This suggests that something extraordinary had stopped the work of art.

Now, let us look at the paintings on the ceiling and walls of the temple. It is the size of the paintings that is the most striking feature. The attention to minute details and the life-like depiction of the scenes have made them famous and second only to the Ajanta paintings. The painters have brought to life, the legends and stories from Saivism and Vaishnavism, of devotees consisting of kings, nobles, soldiers and common people painted in an exquisite manner. They can be distinguished by their varied types of dress, ornaments and hair styles.The flowing dresses, bunching of hair and the attractive ornaments add grace and charm to the women. The paintings mirror the rich social life of the people of the Vijayanagar empire. The largest single painting is that of Lord Veerabhadra. Its magnitude of conception and the brilliant colours is a treat for the lover of art. There are lively hunting scenes depicting the animals and the hunters in the forests.

As we move around the temple, admiring the magnificent and breath-taking paintings, we ponder over the tragedy that had prevented its completion. What a glorious monument it would have been, if only it had been completed. Yet, the call of Lepakshi is irresistible!



THE FATEFUL DECISION

By Anantha Narayanan

As the old emperor Dasaratha was thus reflecting upon the rich qualities of head and heart of his darling son, he felt that the time was ripe to entrust the responsibilities of kingship to Sri Rama.

King Dasaratha, like all the Ikshvaku Kings, being very much concerned with the welfare of his subjects wished to serve them more efficiently, through his young and illustrious son, Sri Rama! This was the only supreme desire left to be fulfilled in his life!

Accordingly, after discussing the matter in detail with his ministers and councillors and with their consent, the emperor decided to install Sri Rama as Prince Regent. Being a truly democratic monarch, the emperor invited prominent citi-

zens of various cities and others of different parts of the country, to seek their advice and consent. However, the King of Kekaya, Bharata's grand father, and King Janaka were omitted.

Addressing the learned assembly, the emperor announced his intention to retire from active rule due to old age after entrusting the power to Sri Rama and sought their consent.

Hearing this delightful news, the entire assembly, overcome with joy, applauded the emperor with one voice "Jai Ram! Jai Ram! Jai Jai Ram!!!"

Sri Rama Gunavali :

In support of their total acceptance of this much awaited proposal to instal their favourite Prince Sri Rama as king, those assembled enthusiastically recounted and praised the pleasing virtues of the talented and God-like Sri Rama!

They said "Sri Rama's virtues have surpassed those of all the Ikshvaku kings! Sri Rama is solely devoted to Truth. Virtue and prosperity have directly proceeded from Him.

"He is ever pleasing to look at like the full moon, has forbearance (क्षमा) like Mother Earth; is wise like Sage Brihaspati (the Guru of Devas) and valorous like Indra.

"He knows what is right and is ever true to his word. He is always amiable and never finds fault with others. He is at all times calm and comforting. He is kind and polite in speech and ever grateful. He is the master of his senses and stable of mind ! He has reverence for the learned, elders and Brahmins.

"He is skilled in the use of all missiles and is also a master of the Vedas and other auxilliary branches of knowledge. (Vedangas).

"Sri Rama has proved himself to be foremost in the art of music! He is of noble descent, saintly, large-hearted and very intelligent!!

"Sri Rama is not only well-equipped in the protection of Dharma but also in running the kingdom efficiently.

"Moreover, Sri Rama is very dear to all of us; for, whenever he meets anyone, even on the street, he affectionately enquires about their welfare.

"Sri Rama has totally identified with our affairs for he feels sorely distressed when he finds anyone in trouble, and rejoices like a father in all our joys and festivities.

"He always speaks with a smiling face. He does not give room for unnecessary arguments as he is very highly skilled in debate!

"Sri Rama is ever attractive and although engaged in the welfare of his people, we have never seen Him blinded by attachment or anger.

He is always impartial and showers riches on the deserving and punishes those who are wicked.

"In short, Sri Rama ever shines brightly by his virtues like the radiant rays of the effulgent sun!!

"The Ikshvaku Kingdom seeks to have Sri Rama as its protector. Your noble son has grown truly capable of doing good to all his subjects. Therefore, O Jewel among kings, we humbly request you in our interest, and we are all sure that you would also feel delighted

to instal our dear Sri Rama as Prince Regent (Yuva Raja), without delay!" Thus pleading the entire assembly rose with folded hands in salutation

When King Dasaratha heard the spontaneous adoration of his darling son from one and all, how ecstatic must he have felt. His joy was equal to that which he experienced at the time of Sri Rama's birth and marriage!

So, in answer to the salutations of those present, Emperor Dasaratha addressed them, with tears of joy thus : "I feel supremely delighted and consider myself extremely fortunate that all of you unanimously desire that my eldest son Sri Rama should be installed as Yuva Raja." Thereafter, the emperor requested his Guru Vasishta and other elders to make immediate arrangements for the installation of Sri Rama.

Joyous and thunderous applause went out from those assembled with cries of "Jai Ram! Jai Ram!! Jai Jai Ram!!!"

Sage Vasishta instructed the King's ministers, Sumantra and others to get ready for the Royal ceremony.

In the meantime according to Emperor Dasaratha's orders, Sumantra conveyed to Rama his father's desire to meet him.

With supreme delight, the emperor announced the happy decision to install him as Yuva Raja! He also lovingly advised Sri Rama, based on his own experiences about the duties and responsibilites of Kingship. Sri Rama humbly received the news with bowed head as a blessing! He listened to his father's loving counsel with deep reverence, although he was fully competent and aware of his duties. After bowing to his dear father, Rama returned to his own apartment.

The happy news spread like wild fire and Sri Rama's friends conveyed the delightful decision to his loving mother Kaushalya.

The Queen was lost in ecstasy like her dear husband, Emperor Dasaratha. Ever since her darling son Rama was born, she was looking forward to this rare event!'

Ayodhya was thrilled! As time was short, preparations were going on in full swing at a feverish pace!! Overnight, the city wore a festive look with flags and festoons and illuminations in every house and street!!

To be Continued

CONTRIBUTORS

Please note that at the end of every article, story or poem sent in, your name and address should be written. It is not enough to put your address on the covering letter.

DELICATE BOY

A mother's letter to a class teacher
Dear Madam,

Please do not beat my son Richard He is a very delicate boy. We never beat him except in self-defence.

* * *

Father : Name two pronouns
Son : Who? Me?

By G. Srinivas

PROBLEM PARENTS

By Mrs. Aruna Sheth

Seven year-old Dilip was going to see his parents when he came face to face with his elder brother, Sunil, who was nine years old. "You better not go in, Dilip", said Sunil.

"Why? I want my pocket money," Dilip replied.

"This is no time to ask for it. Daddy is in a foul mood. Wait a bit till it clears up", advised Sunil with a wink and Dilip understood.

Though neither of them was a graduate in psychology, both knew by previous experience that the weather at home was made up of individual moods.

It is as children, we learn to handle such daily situations that face us. If we have mastered the art of tackling them, we do not find them disturbing in later life.

Growing up therefore is a variety of situations in life that we constantly face and overcome.

Initially, the faith of the child in his parents is total. Experience shows that sometimes we, as parents, do not live up to this trust put in us.

Most children's problems are based on heredity or environment. Let us not forget we are the cause of both. The child is our product and we form the major part of his initial environment.

There are no problem children, only problem parents. Both Dilip and Sunil had learned a lesson.

"When asking for favours, wait and watch the mood of the parents at home or teachers in school or later the boss in office."

This is the result of inconsistent behaviour on the part of the parents. They "give" because they are in a good mood not because of the child's "needs."

The rules and regulations we make are often not clear to ourselves and yet we expect the child to understand and abide by them. We twist the rules to suit our convenience for example take the general rule, "little children should not touch electrical points." When parents are lazy, it is alright to ask the child to plug in or switch on.

It is no wonder then that the child is confused, uncertain and undecided. It is very essential when we lay down a set of rules that they are clear cut and strictly followed both by parents and by children.

Then the child is sure and secure about his position and knows what to expect. What happens when a rule is broken? Should a child be punished?

To be Continued.

366/80
Neeta Puranik
(13 years)
C/10, Ellora
Anushakti Nagar,
Bombay-400 094.

Hobbies : Penfriends, reading, solving quizzes, and playing badminton.

367/80
Sundeep Amolakchand Bhatewara
(12 years)
F/116, Adinath Society
Satara Road, Swargate
Poona-411 009.

Hobbies : Cricket, badminton, hockey, foot ball, collecting stamps and coins.

368/80
K. Latha
(13 years)
C/o. K. Radha Bai
D. No. 985, IInd Main, 3rd Cross
Vijayanagar
Bangalore-560 040.

Hobbies : Throwball, badminton, reading and penfriendship.

Smart Alec

Ram : "You know Shyam, how big my farm is."
Shyam : "No, how big?"
Ram : "It's so big that if you want to reach the other side of it, you will have to go in my car and then also you will reach the other side only by sunset.".
Shyam : "Yes, I know, I once had a car like that."

By Raghav Bhatnagar.

* * *

Nervous Patient : "Doctor, I often feel like killing myself. What should I do?"
Doctor : "Leave it to me."

* * *

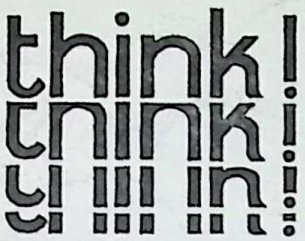
Mr. Sen : "Have any of your wishes been fulfilled?"
Mr. Gupta : "Yes. Often in school days, when our teacher used to pull my hair, I felt how nice it would be if I had no hair. Today I am BALD!"

* * *

One minister : "I can give a lecture on any subject for atleast two hours."
Another : "I do not even need a subject."

By Vaishnav Ujwal,
(15 *years*)

The success and beauty of the individual life helps to build the glory and effectiveness of the nation.
Swastik Textile Mills Ltd.
V. N. Purav Marg, Chembur, Bombay-400 071.



Little things done in a spirit of fervent love are infinitely more precious than much greater things done with less love.

—*Swami Chinmayananda*

In life, it is little actions done with great love that have more meaning than much greater actions done with less love. This is the thought for the month.

Based on it, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Balvihar. The upper age limit for this contest is 15 years. The last date for sending in entries is 15th January, so send your entry soon.

The Winner !

The Winner of the thought for the month of September 1980 is Asha Subramanian of Vashi (11 years). Congratulations, Asha! We have sent you "Bal Ramayana" as a prize.

THE FRUIT OF DEVOTION

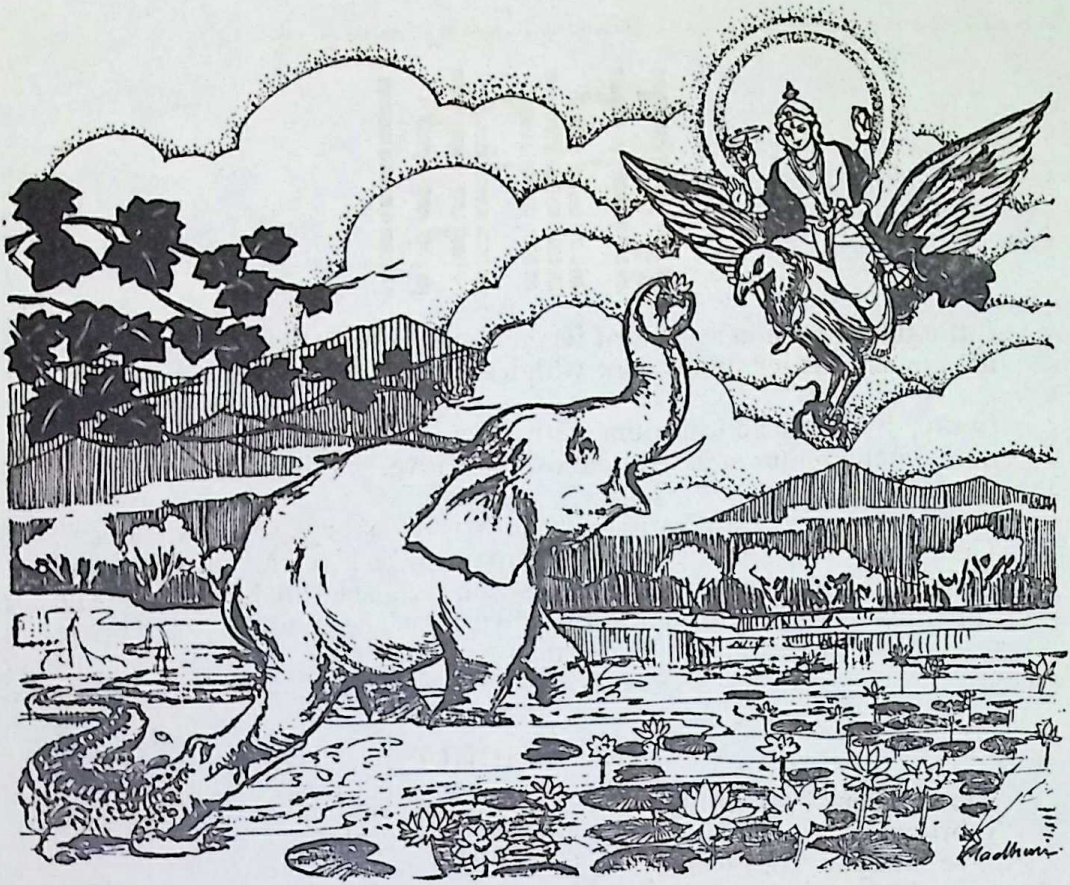
Even when you are losing
Retreat still fighting for every inch
Call up reinforcements from the Lord
through your devotion and surrender.

This is a short story of Indradyumna, a Pandya King, who was famed for his virtue. This is how the story begins :—

Indradyumna, the Pandya king was famed for his virtue. He had all that he wanted. He loved God Vishnu, "the Lord of all Lords."

But one day, he felt that he should go to a silent place where he could live and meditate peacefully. So he called a meeting of his counsellors and said "I have decided that I should retire to the forest and devote all my time to the worship of the Lord. Please do not try to stop me. I am confident that you, counsellors, can and will take care of my kingdom."

Then Indradyumna retired to the Kulachala Mountains, where he built a cottage for himself. Observing the vow of silence, he sat with his mind dwelling upon Lord Vishnu. He sat in such deep meditation that he did not even know if it was day or night.



One day, while he was lost in deep meditation, Sage Agastya happened to pass by. The sage and his disciples stood at the step of the cottage. As Indradyumna was deep in meditation, he did not hear Sage Agastya coming.

Agastya waited for some time and then got angry and thought. "We have come to his door and he does not have the courtesy to welcome us!" At last, he got more angry and cursed Indradyumna "your arrogance shall not go unpunished. May you turn into an elephant."

Now that Indradyumna was an elephant, he began to roam about in the forest and came across a herd of elephants.

The king of these elephants asked Indradyumna where he came from. After he had answered all the questions put to him, the king of the elephants asked him if he was ready to fight. When he agreed to fight, the king of the elephants said "The one who wins will be the king," so the fight began.

After some time, Indradyumna easily overpowered the rival. Indradyumna became their king and was called "Gajendra" which means "King Elephant." The herd went to the Trikuta forest.

One day, while bathing in a river which was the abode of a crocodile, the crocodile got angry. The furious crocodile thought "How dare they

disturb my slumber!" And he got hold of Gajendra's leg.

After bathing, the elephants started moving, when the king elephant cried to them. "Please come and pull me out" All the elephants tried hard but could not pull their master.

When the elephant could not hold on any longer, he thought of Vishnu and he took a lotus and said "O Vishnu, come to my aid, you are my only refuge." The Lord heard his prayers and mounting on Garuda, he left his abode "Vaikuntha" and came flying to earth. When Gajendra saw him he said "Lord, I bow to you, emancipate me." Vishnu responded, and the crocodile fell a victim to his disc (Sudarshan chakra) Offering him the lotus, Gajendra bowed before Vishnu. Vishnu touched him .....and lo! Gajendra regained his human form and Vishnu took him to Vaikuntha.

—*By Asha Harihara Subramanian.*

1. What was the one handed man looking for?
2. Who gets paid for getting his questions answered by others?
3. It has an eye but it cannot see, What is it?
4. What has legs but cannot walk?

Answers on Page 9

SUNSET

By A. R. Geetha
(13 *years*)

My heart urged me to go to the seashore and watch the setting sun. The sun was setting in all its glory. It signalled the end of the day, reaching its destination after a long and tiring journey. The fiery orb looked like a blushing bride wrapped in scarlet and gold. The puffy clouds escorted the sun. Before finally sinking into the shimmering waters of the sea, it left its golden trace in the sky.

There was a vivid reflection of the sunset in the glassy waters of the sea. The environment was still and calm and everything was enchanted. No sound could be heard except the lapping of the waves and the cooing of birds, which filled my heart with utmost peace.

The salt-scented spray touched my feet and the branches swayed in the cool gentle breeze. The land dimmed and I could perceive the birds flying to be reunited with the young ones who chirped in delight. The fishermen returned with their day's catch. The sun sank down and the sea welcomed her.

This beauty made me think of the ALMIGHTY creator before I realized it was time for me to go home. I retraced my steps, recalling the words from V. K. Richards,

".....and
the rose of dusk I see .....Who
hath made thee ....."

THE VISION OF CHRISTMAS

By Lalita Frazier.

Mary could hardly believe her own eyes—an angel! And this sight was not just a quick flash; the vision lingered and even spoke. "Do not be afraid, Mary, for the Lord is with you. I have come to tell you that you will have a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be a great king and will rule forever."

Now Mary's surprise turned to confusion—what could this mean? A son? A great king? It was true that soon she and Joseph, a carpenter from Nazareth, were to be married; surely both of them, as descendents from the line of noble King David, would produce bright and healthy children—but a king? And why does an angel come to tell me this, about having a son, which must be one of the most ordinary and natural joys of marriage.

All these thoughts rushed too quickly through her mind but the angel Gabriel (who was a messenger of the Lord) knew her doubts and continued : "Think not that the child who will be born comes only as the son of earthly parents. He shall be the Son of God. Your friend Elizabeth also will have a child, even though she is very old. Nothing is too hard or impossible for the Lord."

Suddenly Mary's troubled mind quietened and she felt the deep faith she had established within herself by a life lived simply, honestly and harmlessly, with daily prayers and devoted worship. "The angel is right," she thought, "this whole world is God's creation; why can't He just as easily give anything which He decides is right for us, His children?"

Strange as this messege was, the serene mind of Mary would not worry about or argue what the angel had just told her : "Let it be as you have said," was her trusting reply. A smile came to her lips as she thought about the joys of motherhood that she and her friend Elizabeth were soon to share.

* * *

It all happened as the angel Gabriel had foretold; Mary and Joseph were married in Nazareth and later went to Bethlehem where a son was born. (The day of this birth would thereafter be celebrated as Christmas). They named him Jesus (Jeshua in their language) which means "God saves", It was a usual name for a boy in those days, 2,000 years ago, but the child would not simply **have** this name, he would **be** the name.

In the stable where Jesus had just been born, Mary held the infant in her arms and looked down on him with the eyes of pure love. "We will take care of Him," she thought, "God's own ....." He could have descended on a cloud, a miracle of nature—but no, he was to be born as any human child, as her child, she who was only a poor, simple woman .....

But Mary's joy was never poor or simple. Even on the day she told Elizabeth about the angel's visit, her happiness had been so great that what she had felt and said became a song the **Song of Mary** (from the Bibl'e).

"My soul magnifies the Lord,
I rejoice in God, my Savior,
For He has looked upon me,
Although I am but a poor, humble woman.
The people will call me blessed,
Because the Mighty One has done great things through me.
Holy is His name, and His mercy is for all .....".

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES

1. A second hand shop
2. A teacher, by his students.

By Raghav Bhatnagar

3. A needle
4. A piece of furniture

By S. Babu (11 *years*)

Cheques to be drawn in the name of "Central Chinmaya Mission Trust"

A CASKET OF PEARLS

By Usha B. Rao

The lashing waves at the crack of dawn,
All, bathed in red to welcome the morn,
Their gleaming tops embrace the sands
To fill the cups of thirsty lands.
Over the horizon, small boats do rock,
Cradled in the seamless blue hammock.
And snow white gulls skim every wave,
As the blue carpet their path does pave.
There they sail till the fall of even,
When fiery stars do deck the Heaven.
The Casket of Pearls lulls itself to sleep
The golden ball, drowned in the endless deep.

AN INTERVIEW WITH PATAUDI

With best wishes to the readers of Bal Vihar

Pataudi.

Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi, better known as "Tiger", holds the record of being one of the only two Indian batsmen to make a double century against England in Test Cricket. A student of the famous Oxford University, he captained the Oxford team in 1961. Besides this, he captained India in 1962, 1963-64 and in 1967. In one of these series, he won the toss on all five occasions against England. He has also had the privilege of captaining the World XI. He has produced a record of an unfinished stand of 190 with Chandu Borde, which is the best for the fifth wicket stand by India on Indian soil.

Amrita Neogi : From when were you introduced to cricket?

Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi : From a very young age, ever since I can remember. My father was a cricketer, so I was well acquainted with the game.

A. N. : Did you play other games besides cricket?

M. P. : Oh yes, all games at school—hockey, football, squash. But, after entering college, one must specialize in a certain branch. So I opted for cricket.

A. N. : Did you receive any coaching?

M. P. : Yes. From my father, then from former England player Frank Woolley and Doggard, who also played for England.

shore? Now I find no way to get ashore. A monstrous wave may dash me against the rock. If I swim along the coast, a receding wave may push me back deep into the sea. Even if I escape from these dangers, some angry God may send against me a fierce beast. Already Poscidon is very angry with me."

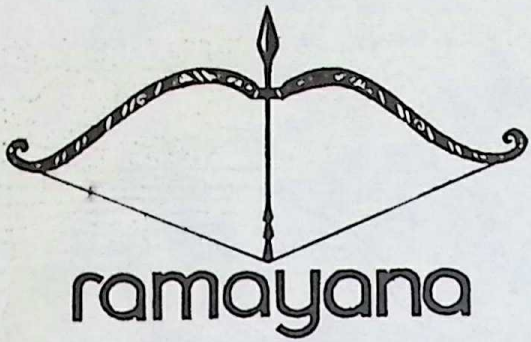
Even while he was so thinking, a monstrous wave smote him and dashed him againt the rock. By catching hold of the rock with his hands, he avoided a heavy dash. But the same wave while receding pushed him back into the sea. To avoid further assaults, he leapt over the line of the violent waves and swam along. At the same time, he was watching the shore to see whether there was any spit.

He found a swift river mingling with the sea there. He thought that he could get ashore by swimming into the river. But the water in it was flowing quite swiftly. He therefore prayed to the god of the river. "Whoever thou art, O God of this river, have mercy on me and kindly listen to me. I am your suppliant. Driven by the anger of Poscidon my suffering knows no bounds. I have wandered in this wide sea for the past two days. Prithee, help me to get ashore."

The prayer had the desired effect. Pity welled up in the heart of that God and he smothered the flow in the river. When Odysseus was about to swim into the river, a wild wave smote him and filled his nostrils and mouth with salt water. For a while, he lost control over his senses. He somehow managed to swim in to the river.

After getting well within the river, he cast off the veil given by Ino. It safely reached the hands of the goddess. He swam across the river and reached the bank. Upon standing on the earth, his joy knew no bounds. In his joy he kissed the earth. By that time, night had come. There was a dense wood on the bank of the river. He went there and lay beneath a thick olive bush. Soon he was within the bounds of sound sleep.

To be Continued.



THE DRAMA BEGINS

By Anantha Narayanan.

The angry Kaikeyi, with her poisoned mind, lost all her sense of judgement and became a puppet in the hands of evil Manthara! For she screamed thus : "I shall without delay despatch Rama to the forest from here, this very day. Further, I shall install my Bharatha on the throne without loss of time! Manthara, tell me how to achieve this."

The crafty and sinful Manthara replied "Please remember that long ago in the war between the Dewas and Asuras, your husband Dasaratha helped Indra. At that time when he was struck down senseless by a deep wound, you saved him by taking him away to a safe place and nursed him back to life.

Being mighty pleased by your services the king, out of gratitude, offered you two boons of your choice. You did not avail of the boons then but said you would claim them when needed.

Kaikeyi, you had told me all this and now you have forgotten! Out of affection for you, I had kept this in my mind so long.

Now is the time to ask for the boons. Binding your husband with an oath, first stop the preparations for Rama's coronation.

By the two boons, ask your husband to install Bharatha as Yuvaraja and banish Rama to the forest for fourteen years."

Further detailed instructions were given by the evil Manthara to Kaikeyi like a drama director!

In ancient days in palaces, there was a separate chamber (कोपागारे) for persons who became angry and wanted to show their protest. This was perhaps to prevent disturbances in society arising out of individual likes and dislikes of members of the royal household in the Raj Bhavan.

Manthara said, "Oh Kaikeyi dear! Enter the anger-chamber today itself as though you have become very angry and deeply hurt. Wearing soiled clothes, lie down on the bare floor without any ornaments. As soon as the king enters the chamber and sees you in this condition, start weeping.

Never look at him nor speak to him. You are the most beloved of the king and he will even lay down his life for your sake! So, he cannot disregard your words. Do not be led away by his sweet words and tempting offers. Extract an oath from the king to grant you your wish. When the king agrees, remind him and demand the two boons promised earlier in life. By one boon, Rama should be sent in exile for 14 years and for the other, Bharata should be installed as ruler.

When Rama is exiled, your son would be firmly established as the ruler of Ayodhya for 14 years and thereafter will continue to rule even

after Rama's return. The exiled Rama will surely become unpopular and will be forgotten. Your son Bharata will be the ruler without any enemies."

"Be fearless and act firmly. Prevent the king from installing Rama as ruler."

Taught by the hunchback to treat evil as good, Kaikeyi felt delighted and showered praises on Manthara for her timely advice as her only well-wisher.

Promising to act exactly as advised, the proud and foolish Kaikeyi casting off all her ornaments, lay down on the bare floor with her face down, flushed with rage.

Thus the sinful Kaikeyi, who had become a victim of bad company and evil counsel, was awaiting the arrival of the innocent King Dasaratha to her chamber!

The first act in the fateful drama was thus over!

To be Continued.

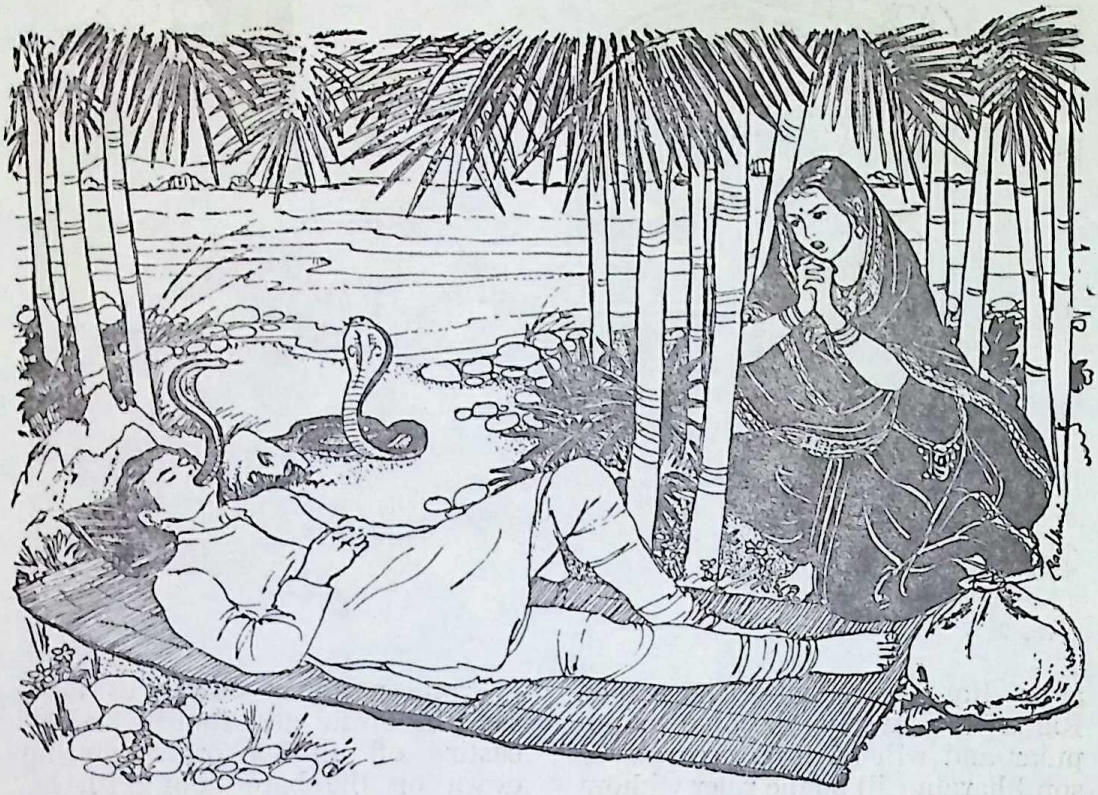
THE SNAKE IN THE PRINCE'S STOMACH

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

Retold By Lalogue Postvala

Long, long ago in a certain city lived a brave and handsome king. His name was God-like. His only son was called Godly. Both God-like and Godly were good men. They looked after the kingdom and their people with care and affection. Theirs was a happy land.

One day in spring, Godly fell ill. His stomach ached terribly. He



could not eat or drink anything. As the days went by, the prince grew weak and thin for a bad hooded snake had made the prince's stomach his home, instead of living in an ant-hill or a hole in the tree. No one could lure the snake out of the prince's stomach. The king and all his people grieved for the prince. This made Godly very unhappy. So one night, the sick prince crept away from the palace and went to another country.

In the new city, he led a simple life, seeking alms and spending most of his time in a temple.

The king of that city had two pretty daughters. Every morning, it was customary for them to bow at their Father's feet and greet him. The elder greeted the King with the words, "Victory O King", and the younger said, "Your deserts O King."

The words "Your deserts" greatly irritated the King. He would often taunt his daughter. One morning in anger, he said, "See my men, this young lady does not have any manners or love for the King. Give her away to some foreigners. Let her then have her own deserts."

To this, the King's courtiers agreed. They searched for a stranger to their country and found the prince clad in poor garments at the gate of the temple. They brought him to the court. The King, mis-

taking him for a begger, married off his daughter to him.

The Princess, however, was delighted with her husband. She respected him like a God. Together they left the city. In the new town, they set up a home by the riverside. The prince being in poor health because the snake in his stomach was still troubling him, the princess went alone to the market to buy some things for the house.

The cool gentle breeze from the riverside soon lulled Godly into sweet slumber.

When the Princess returned from the market, she found the Prince asleep with his head resting on an ant-hill. From his mouth dangled the head of the hooded snake, taking in the cool air; another snake crawled from the ant-hill, also to take the air.

Seeing each other, the snakes fanned out their fangs; the ant-hill snake hissed. "You rascal, how can you torment a handsome and kind prince in this way?"

The snake from Godly's mouth spat out, "You're a great one for calling me a villain. Aren't you ashamed of yourself for covering two pots of gold with mud, and then warming your fat stomach on them?" They continued in this fashion. The Princess, hiding behind the tree, listened quietly.

When they had shouted at each other for some time, the snake on the ant-hill said, "You rogue-doesn't anybody know the simple remedy of destroying you by drinking black mustard?" The other snake retorted, "And doesn't anybody know that he can kill you by pouring hot water on you?"

On hearing this, the Princess was very happy. She waited patiently for the snakes to stop fighting. No sooner than the exhausted snakes returned to their holes, she acted on their suggestions and destroyed both of them. She thus succeeded in not only curing her husband but acquiring vast wealth.

The happy couple returned to their country. The princess was welcomed with great pomp and honour by her father-in-law and by her father as well. She had received her just deserts.

CONTEMPLATION ON DISCIPLINE.

By Lalitha Frazier

260. A man is not an elder because his head is grey; his age may be ripe, but he is called "Old-in-vain."

261. He in whom there is truth, virtue, pity, restraint, moderation, he who is free from impurity and is wise, he is called an elder.

From the Dhammapada; XIX 'The Just.'

In our previous contemplation we had seen how good parent/child communication is essentially dependent on the parent's attitude towards the child. That is to say, if we assume that our child is lacking in intelligence or is insensitive, (whether we say it or not),then this expectation will colour the results of our interaction. A child responds repectfully to our regard for his/her worth and dignity as another human being. Successful communication hinges upon our heartfelt esteem for each other.

Perhaps, you may say, that this one-to-one communicatien works well with adults that are our friends and peers, but with children we have a distinct role of authority to play in parenting. In communicating with our children, it is not just to share mutual thoughts and feelings, but there is a specific purpose in many instances where we must define limits to their behavior, impose rules to be followed for their safety and the harmony of the household, deliver the appropriate responses in terms of rewards and punishments to their actions. Is it possible to be on such "friendly" terms with the child when some of our communication must include unargued requests and indisputable commands instead of polite discussion and mutual compromise? Don't we need to keep a "strong upper hand" where we are undeniably respected, even perhaps feared in order to insure that our authority is taken seriously? What will work to guarantee that we will receive the attention and compliance we need in order to function as a responsible parent? It is this aspect of communication in regard to discipline that is the topic taken here for contemplation.

In the contemplation on communication, we had looked at our attitude towards the child. Here let's look at some attitudes and assumptions about ourself in the parent/child relationship. First let's consider if all the ways that I hope the child will respond to me (i. e. as intelligent, capable, respectful, uncompromising with what I say is true), are these the attributes that I indeed see in myself? How can I expect a child (who is not easily pursuaded by what I **say,** but what I **do**) to listen and obey my words when I, myself, don't honestly believe myself to be a person worthy of respect? So in order to evoke appreciation for my authority as an elder from a child, I must have the minimum qualification of seeing myself as one deserving this position of authority. This does not mean that the parent must be error-free, but it does suppose a constant enquiry into our own mental make-up, and the willingness to see our motives and expectations as they really are. The question of how to discipline our child naturally involves how we handle our own self-discipline.

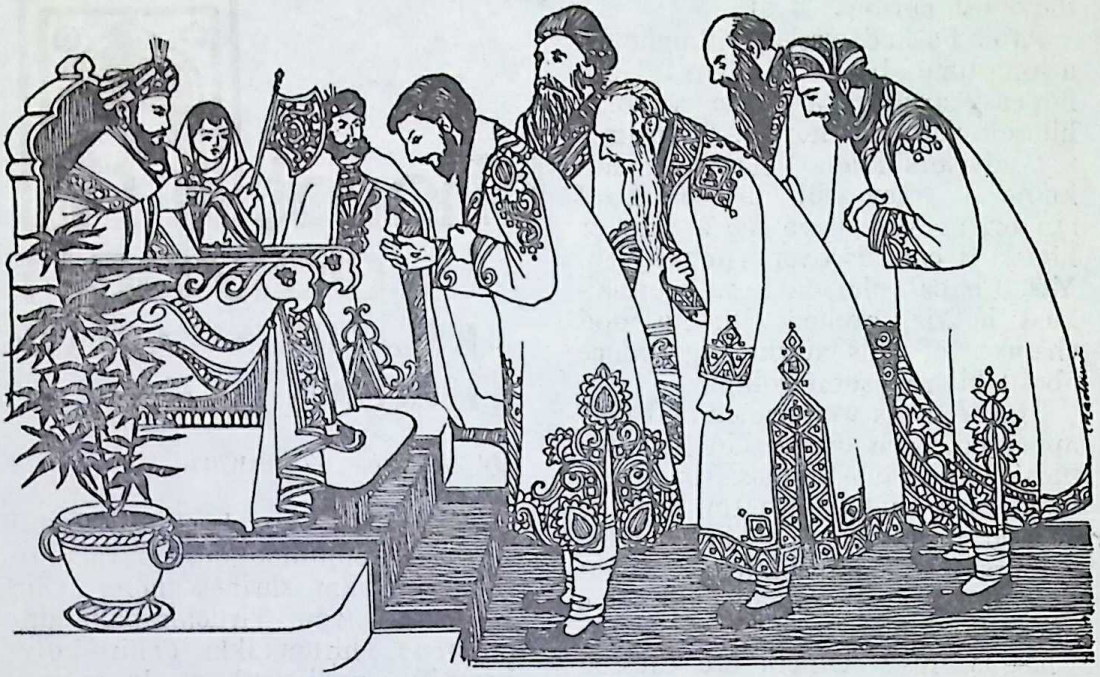
To be Continued.

DELAY

We regret that due to unavoidable circumstances, the November and December issues were delayed.

THE MYSTERY OF THE SEED

By Lalita Frazier.



Did you ever wonder about life, how things are made and how they work; or maybe just wanted to know why a person acted the way they did, or if what you heard was really true? Perhaps you went with your question to someone who you thought was very wise; could be it was Daddy or Mummy or a teacher at school. And do you remember how good it felt to know the answer?

If this wanting to know answers has already happened to you and you've felt the happiness of discovering the answer to your important question, you can now imagine how sad it was for a king, who had all the time and money he needed to find out answers to any question he could think of, to be unable to get the answer to just one of his questions. And it was such a simple thing he was asking, so it seemed, yet none of his advisors (although they were all very smart) could give him an answer to what the king wanted to know most of all which was "who am I?"

You might think this sounds like a silly question for anyone to ask, but you'll remember how this king loved learning most of all in his life. He had read and studied and listened and came to know so many hidden secrets and dark mysteries. It was so much fun to try out an

answer and have it appear and suddenly chase away all wondering and wanting to know. And the day that he discovered that he didn't know himself was the day he became the most curious of all.

After he had already thought for a long time about "who am I," but no easy answer came, he consoled himself with the hope : "Certainly my advisors know what I do not know .....they will tell me who I am or, at least, give me a clue or hint so I can discover it for myself. Yes, I'll call the advisors!" exclaimed the king excited with the good chances of this dark ignorance about himself soon going.

The advisors were called and they appeared, each dressed in his own particular style of clothes, some with long robes that almost touched the marble palace floor. Their bright colours in playful patterns caught the glance and it was only with some effort that they came to see, ...oh, what is this? Others are dressed in simple clean white, and so little to notice of clothes that the sparkling eyes of the wearer are all that can be said about their appearance. Also, some of these wise men had beards while others had little or no hair at all...some with carefree smiles others seriously frowning at the occasion.

For all advisors are different; just as all advice is different, as we shall soon see.

When they had finally assembled, the King, now almost rudely impatient, asked his question : "come, come, who will be the first to tell me who am I?"

(To be Continued)

bharat darshan

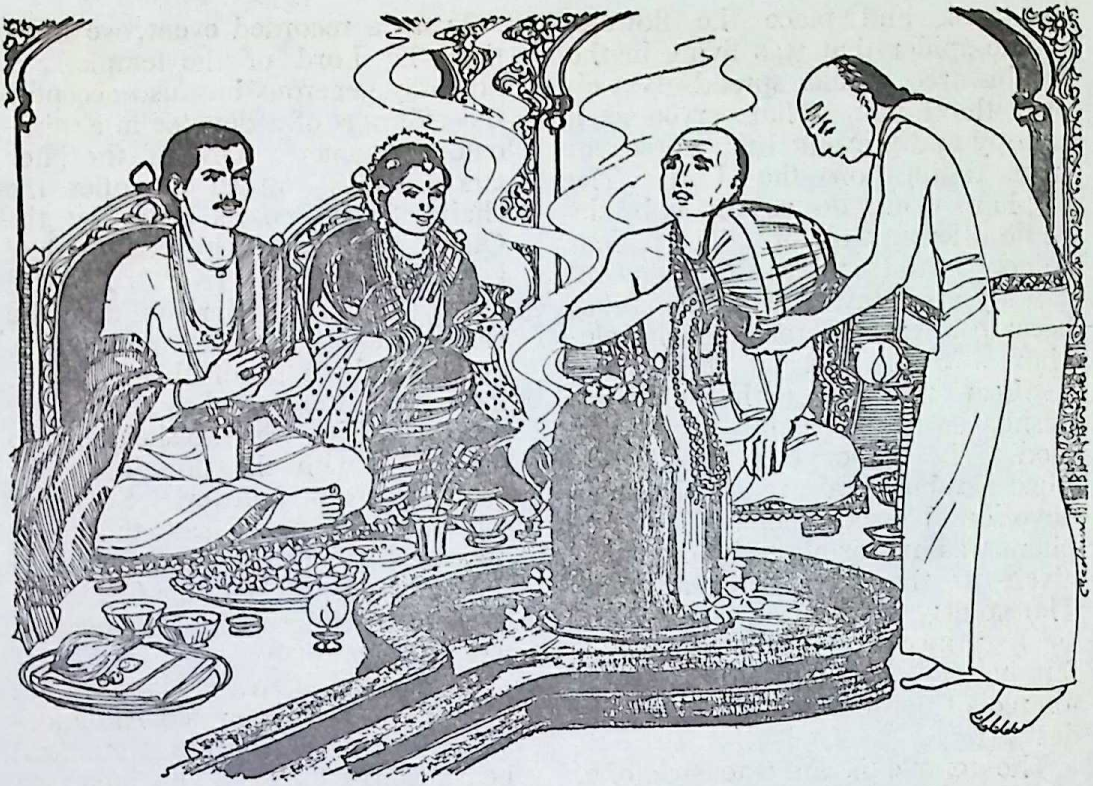
AKILANDESWARI OF THIRUANAIKKA

By Dr. R. Vajreswari

To-day we are back in Tamil Nadu to continue our journey to the important shrines there. Six kilometres from Tiruchirapalli junction, is Thiruanaikka (Thiru-holy-beautiful: anai-elephant: ka-grove). The temple is set amidst sylvan surroundings, on the north bank of river Kauveri. It is one of the Panchaboota-sthalams. The Linga here is Appu (water) and it is always surrounded by water.

We have already seen that the legends and stories connected with temples help us to understand the significance and special traditions of the temples. So we look at a few of the legends connected with this temple.

Once Devi Parvati had a doubt and she was directed to do penance at Thiruvanaikka. She came to this place and made a lingam out of water particles and worshipped it.



Lord Siva gave darshan to Parvati and cleared her doubts. It is a noticeable feature that the Devi of the temple, Goddess Akilandeswari (Akilam—Universe; Iswari-Goddess) and Lord Jambulinga face each other, as the Devi listened to the explanation of the Lord. Even to-day, the midday puja to Lord Siva is done by the priest of the Devi temple, dressed in a woman's attire, reminding us of the puja done by Devi.

The Sthalavriksha of the place is a white Jambu tree. (I am sure you are fond of Jambu fruits which are dark in colour). The place was a forest of Jambu trees. A saint by name Sambu, was doing penance. One day, a big white jambu fruit fell before him. The sage offered it to Lord Siva and as prasad swallowed it with the seed. Strangely, the seed sprouted and became a tree in the very body of the saint. He prayed to Lord Siva to take His abode under that tree and the Lord accepted the invitation of the saint. So the Lord of this place is called Jambulinga or Jambunatha, one who dwells under the Jambu tree. We can see the Sthalavriksha which is protected.

There is a moving story connected with the devotion of an elephant and a spider who mistook the intervention of each other leading to their death. Two Siva Ganas were cursed to be born—one as a white elephant and the other as a spider and lived in the Jambu forest. Both were great devotees of Lord Jambunatha. The elephant would daily shower on the Lord, the water collected in

its trunk and place the flowers.

The spider that was living in the Jambu tree would spread its web over the Linga. That served as a canopy and prevented the dry leaves from falling on the Lord. The elephant would destroy the cobwebs while offering worship. The patient spider would spread its beautiful canopy everyday. Once the spider became angry and entered the elephant's trunk and bit it. Unable to bear the pain, the elephant dashed its trunk on the ground and died. The spider was also killed. Lord Jambunatha, moved by their devotion, blessed them. The elephant was immortalised by the name given to the place, Thiruanaikka. The spider was blessed to be born as a prince in the royal Chola family and he built the original temple of Jambunatha and Akilandeswari.

The temple is an extensive one. There are five prakaras (courtyards); the fourth prakara is called Vibuthi Prakara (Vibuti—sacred ash). This wall is 35 ft. high and 6 ft. thick and measures 2500 ft. long and 1500 ft. broad. When the Chola king was building the temple, Lord Siva came as Siddhar (miracle worker) and undertook to build this wall. He gave Vibuti as wages to the labourers. When they went home and opened their hands, it had turned into gold, and surprisingly the amount of gold depended on the work put in by the labourer. Naturally, the labourers were thrilled and worked to the maximum and the wall was constructed in record time. Even to-day, it is considered meritorious to go round this prakara as one's desires are fulfilled.

From a recorded event, we learn that the Lord of the temple was not only generous but also accepted the offerings of a devotee in a miraculous manner. One of the later Chola Kings wanted to offer the chain of rare pearls worn by the Queen. The royal couple had gone to the river Kauveri for a bath in the river and the chain was lost in the river. Unhappy because of this incident, the couple went to the temple and were watching the abishekham to the Lord, with the pots of water brought from Kauveri. Suddenly the king and queen saw the chain of pearls falling on the linga, from the water-pot. They were filled with joy that the offering had beenaccepted so graciously.

We learn tl at Adi Sankara visited the temple and decorated Akilandeswari with gold ear-rings (tatankas) bearing Sri-Chakra. This increased the benign powers of the Goddess. He also installed Lord Ganesa, her first born, in front of Her, so that all who worshipped Her could derive the benefit of the loving glances of the Divine Mother.

There are many small shrines dedicated to Gods and Goddesses. There are a number of mantapas and the notable ones are the hundred pillared mantapa, thousand pillared mantapa and Kurathi mantapa. There are beautiful sculptures in these mantapas, revealing the exquisite workmanship of the sculptors and the artistic taste of the patrons. To mention one notable sculpture, Eka-Pada-Trimurti is a grand one. It is a marvellous piece, with one leg only (eka pada). Siva is in the centre, Brahma and Vishnu are on

the right and left. The vahanas—bull, swan and Garuda can be seen in the foregound.

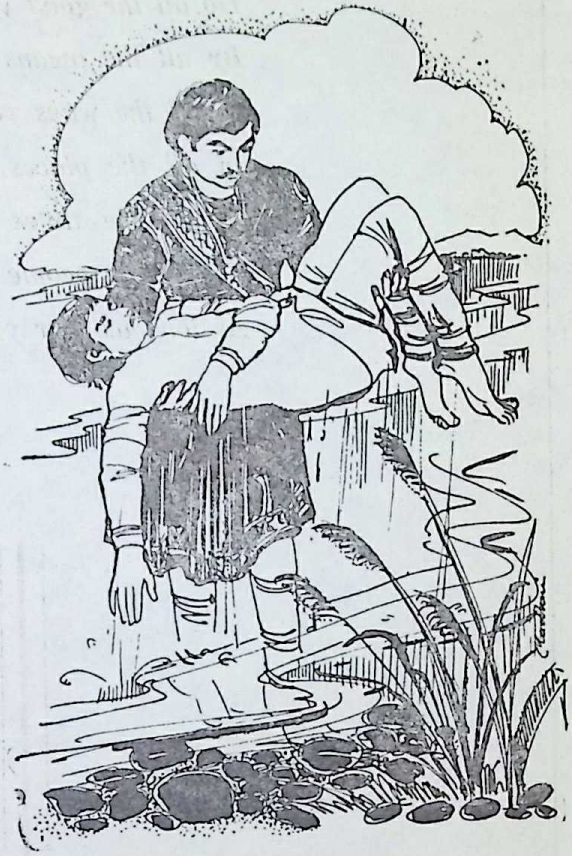
The eastern Gopuram has seven tiers and the decorative designs in this gopuram can be described as a "Picture gallery." All the great ruling dynastics of Deccan and South India have added to the glory of this temple.

ANSWERS TO CRICKET QUIZ
Published in November 1980.
By Anandji Jamnadas Dossa

1. The batsman who gets out in both innings of a match without scoring a run is termed as having bagged a "pair", meaning a pair of spectacles. When the batsman gets out to the first ball, he faces in both innings without scoring, he is said to have bagged a 'King's Pair."
2. N. J. Contractor scored 152 and 102, not out for Gujarat v Baroda at Baroda, 1952-53. The other is Arthur Morries of New South Wales (Australia) Both are incidentally left-handers.
3. Not out. The rule is "A striker may not be caught if a ball has touched a protective helmet worn by a fieldsman."
4. 1934-35 at Brisbane (Australia) between Australia and England.
5. In India, the stadium at Eden Gardens, Calcutta which has an official capacity of 73,000 in the world. The largest is at Melbourne Cricket Ground, Victoria (Australia) with a capacity of 1,20,000.

A Stroke of Luck

By Raksha V. Wagle



Long ago, in a village there lived a brave man. His name was Ram. He was very poor, but he always got up very early and prayed to God. He was honest, sincere and hard- working. He helped everyone as much as possible. He did not smoke or drink and yet at the end of the day, he got very little money. He had many difficulties yet he did not forget God, and he did not fall into bad company even if he was tempted to.

One day, as he was working by the river, he fell down and was carried away by the current. At that time, the king of the country was hunting nearby. Luckily he saw him and rescued him. The king wished to give him a lot of money but Ram refused. "I do not like charity even though I am poor. I prefer to work," he said. The king was very happy to hear his words.

Within a short time, he was appointed the governor of the island. After some years, the king died and Ram became king of the country as the king had no sons.

Ram tried to do his best for the kingdom. He always helped the poor and the needy. He never forgot God and his village. In a short time, he became famous all over the world for his generosity and justice.

One day, a saint came to meet him. As usual, he was busy. The saint asked him "What are you doing? Are you busy with work?" Ram replied, "Yes. Work is worship. I pray to God in the morning and start my work. Hard work is my real religion."

The saint was pleased. He blessed him and disappeared. Ram was astonished. He realised it must have been God himself in disguise. He knew it to be true because he passed the rest of his days in joy.

HIPPOCRATES—THE FATHER OF MEDICINE

By Ratna Nair

When you fall sick, to whom do you go? Do you go to your teacher? or to your friends for treatment? No. You go to a doctor. They know what type of medicine should be given to us.

Hippocrates is known as the father of medicine. In ancient Greece, medical knowledge was guarded as sacred secrets to be passed on from a physician father to his son.

Asclepius, the son of Apollo was the God of Medicine in Greek mythology. Temples were erected in his honour where the sick would sacrifice a goat or a pig and pray for good health.

The fifth and fourth centuries B. C. were the Golden Age of Enlightenment in Greece. Socrates, Plato and other wise men lived during this time. Hippocrates also lived during this time. He was born in the year 460 B. C. on the island of Cos in the Aegean Sea. Very little is known about his life.

His father was a physician at the temple of Cos. Hippocrates was initiated into the secret art of healing the sick by his father. He was a very brilliant boy. So his father sought out the wisest teachers in the land to give his son the best possible education. Hippocrates visited great centres of learning like Athens. He insisted that the physician should study the patient, and not just his illness. He must learn about the patient's daily routine, his food habits, his occupation and the place he lived in.

Dissection, or cutting up the body after death was strictly forbidden in Greece. So their knowledge of the human body was very primitive. Inspite of this, Hippocrates wrote a treatise on fractures and dislocation of bones. His methods of treating dislocation and fractures which include bandaging are surprisingly

modern.

During times of war, physicians accompanied the Greek armies to battle fields to take care of the wounded and the sick. Hippocrates also served as an army surgeon.

Hippocrates had instructions for the preparation of the operating room and the surgical instruments. Wounds were cleaned very well before closing them by bandage. Great stress was placed on diet, care and nursing of the patient.

Many ignorant doctors regarded Epilepsy, a sickness characterised by the loss of consciousness as the expression of the anger of a displeased god or demon, and attempted to cure it by charms and incantations. Hippocrates pointed out that these doctors regarded these diseases as sacred because they did not know the real cause.

He said, no matter how violent a disease, it must have a natural cause.

To Hippocrates, medicine was an art as well as a science. He said, "Medicine is the most noble of all arts, but due to the ignorance of those who practise it, it is far behind other arts."

His pupils were bound to their master by a private contract that was later expressed as the Hippocratic Oath. His great work called the "Hippocratic Collection", was the physicians' bible for almost 500years.

Down through the ages, each new doctor, who he receives his medical degree, publicly professes the Hippocratic Oath to "keep pure and holy both his life and his art."

THE STRANGE CHANGE

By Chitra Rao

Scene I

(A garden in which flowers and butterflies sing)

"We all friends,
Live in this garden
Which has been our home,
for ever so long.

The sunflowers, the daisies and roses, dance in the breeze. *While from flower to flower we flit, collecting the nectar so sweet."*

The butterflies fly away. Only the flowers are left in the garden. Enter, a green fat creature (caterpillar).

"Oh look", cries the rose, "whatever is that?" The flowers all turn round, and see the creature crawling slowly towards them.

"He is so ugly," whispered the daisy to the sunflower.

"Shh! He will hear you," said the sunflower going forward.

"Hello stranger, who are you?"

Caterpillar : "I am a caterpillar. What are your names?"

Sunflower : "I am Sunflower, this is Rose and here is Daisy."

Caterpillar : "Can I live here for sometime?"

"Sure", replied the flowers, and the caterpillar continued slowly.

Scene II

The caterpillar is lying down behind some bushes. He overhears the flowers talking.

Daisy : "What an ugly creature the caterpillar is. I wonder where he is now?"

Rose : "Don't be mean; he can't help being ugly."

The butterflies come flying in at that moment. The flowers and butterflies exchange greetings. The caterpillar peeps round the bush to see who the visitors are. On seeing the butterflies he says "How beautiful they are; how I wish I could be like them!"

Scene III

The caterpillar is eating, the rose whispers to the other flowers, "Something is wrong with Mr. Caterpillar. He keeps eating all the time."

Daisy : "So why worry? If he was sick, he wouldn't eat at all."

Sunflower : "At the rate he is eating, he will burst at any moment."

Suddenly right before their eyes, the skin of the caterpillar begins to burst. The flowers cover their eyes," "he is bursting out of his skin."

After a while, when they open their eyes, they see the caterpillar crawling out of its skin.

Daisy : "He is alive."

Rose : "Mr. Caterpillar, we thought you were dead."

Mr. Caterpillar : "Dear me, no. I was just moulting. This is the second time it has happened. The first time I was very frightened, but now I am not."

The next day, the caterpillar acts very sluggish and lazy.

Scene IV

Flowers wake up after a night's sleep, rubbing their eyes.

Rose : "What is this, next to me?" She sees a round cacoon, bends down and touches it.

Daisy : "Where is Mr. Caterpillar? He was asleep next to you, Rose"

Rose : "I know, but he isn't here. Maybe, he has gone somewhere. Look what I found" pointing to the cacoon.

Rose, bending down, knocks against the side of the cacoon "I can hear something."

Fifteen days pass by. Rose cries "Look, it is breaking."

The cacoon bursts open and a beautiful butterfly emerges. On seeing the flowers, it cries "Hello, Rose, Daisy, and Sunflower."

The flowers : "How do you know us?"

Butterfly : "But I am Caterpillar, your friend."

Daisy : "You are not a caterpillar, you are a butterfly."

Butterfly looking down at itself : "Yes, I am a butterfly, but how did it happen?"

Just then the butterflies come flying.

"What is wrong, why are you looking surprised?"

Daisy : "He is a butterfly, but earlier he was a caterpillar. Don't you know a caterpillar always turns into a butterfly?"

Butterfly : "Oh! I am happy, I used to always envy the butterflies, not realising that one day I would become one."

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Rina Mehta
(15 years)
13/E, Malabar Apartments
Nepean Sea Road,
Bombay-400 036.
Hobbies : Penfriendship, music, basket ball, cricket, reading, cycling and jokes.

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Vasudev Sudarsana
211 'C' Block 1
Kishore Mansions
Ambedkar Road,
Matunga,
Bombay-400 019.
Hobbies : Cycling, reading, football, cricket, hockey, table tennis, carrom and stamp collection.

Smart Alec

Jehangir was taking part in a local concert. He was only seven, but performed so well that he was asked to sing an encore "Well Jehangir, how did you get on with your part?" asked the proud father when he returned home.

"Why, I thought I had done it all right," replied Jehangir, "but they made me do it again."

* * *

Teacher : "I see you like reading travel books"
Tommy : "But you are reading your book backwards."
Sunil : "Yes, I am on my return journey."

* * *

"If the Principal doesn't take back what he said to me this morning, I'm going to leave the college."
"What did he say?"
"He told me to leave college."

* * *

Poonam : "Isn't Harish married?
Priya : "No, and I don't think he intends to, because he's studying for a bachelor's degree."

By Priya Mehra.

* * *

"This is my travelling suit."
"Travelling Suit?"
"Yes, it travelled from my grand father down to me."

By Mahesh Wanuari.

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